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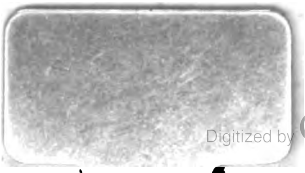

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EARLY DAYS.

1878.

LONDON:
WESLEYAN CONFERENCE OFFICE,
2, CASTLE-STREET, CITY-ROAD,
SOLD AT 66, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

Third Series.—Volume II.

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EARLY DAYS

'Go forth, O Winter, and do My will.'

See page 2.

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WINTER'S MONARCH.

I DREAMT of the Winter King
one night;
He stood arrayed in a robe
of white;
A holly wreath with the
dew-drops wet,
By unseen hands, on his
brow was set;
And heaps of crystals were
scatter'd round,
Just in the place where I
saw him crowned.

An angel, standing with
folded wings,
Said, 'This is the word of
the King of kings:
Go forth, O Winter, and do My will,
Bid the flowing streams awhile be still;
Let each blade of grass receive a gem,
And each little flower a diadem.'

And then I watched him as he stole forth,
Laden with spoils from the frozen north,
Hanging the icicles here and there,
Stopping to gaze with an artist's care;
Sketching on windows, with chilly hand,
Visions and dreams of his native land.

And next he came to a streamlet's side,
And gazed unseen on the mimic tide;
The wavelets paused in their onward course,
Yielding at once to the silent force;
With the ripples still on their tiny crests,
They fell asleep on each other's breasts.

Away to a lake's calm shore went he,
Where trees bent, kissing the waters free,
And bound them together in mute embrace,
The evergreen leaves and the lake's white face;
Then solemnly crowned the sleeping flowers,
And flung his gems on the grass in showers.

In those lonely haunts to men unknown,
Where squirrels leap and wild winds moan,
The berries, flushed with a ruby glow,
Hide in the spot where the hollies grow;
Where far-off stars through the branches peep,
Watching the birds in their nests asleep.

He climbed up the trees and softly breathed,
Till clinging snowflakes the bare boughs wreathed;
And standing at last in a lovely dell,
He flung around it his magic spell,
And clothed it in splendours God had given,
Showing that earth is thought of in heaven.

He glided out from the lone retreat,
Without a sound of his stealthy feet,
And suddenly vanished amid the trees,
Called by a voice on the whispering breeze;
Then the daylight came to surprise the night,
And broke on a world all cold and white.

(*For Music, see page* 16.)

EVAN G. LYNE.

1878.

BY THE REV. W. O. SIMPSON.

BY the time this number of *Early Days* will be in the hands of its readers the year Eighteen Hundred and Seventy-Eight will have begun. 1878: Little eyes can recognize the figures, 1, 8, 7, 8; little scholars, in the first rules of arithmetic, can read them off. But no eye can see, no mind foretell, the events which will come to pass in any one's life before the yule-log glows again upon the fire and crackles out, '1, 8, 7, 8; going, going, gone!'

I have read of a group of emigrants in their new country, standing on the edge of a vast plain and surveying the prospect in silent awe. Just think you see them—old men and little children; grandfathers, husbands, wives,

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prattling girls and frolicsome boys. In the grey dawn of early morning they look out upon the prairie. Some of them see further than others, none of them can see very far. They see so little into the distance that they fear to venture upon the paths that are close to their feet. The youngest are the happiest. If a little fear creeps into the heart of this five-years-old boy, he gets to his father's side, looks up into his face cheerily, and exclaims, 'Father, take my hand.' Such is 1878 to every one of us. We know 'not what a day may bring forth,'—yet there will be three hundred and sixty-five of them ere the year closes. Who will live? Who will die? Who will be merry all the year through? Who will be sad? Little eyes become thoughtful as they look into that future, and the best thing for little knees to do is to kneel before 'Our Father in heaven,' and pray, 'Father, take my hand.'

The flowers will be here by and by, dear children. Mary will find a yellow crocus peeping through the snow in her garden-plot, and Tom will bring the first snowdrop from his corner to mamma. A few months more, and children who are happy enough to live near lanes and hedgerows will be out in the woods, roaming by sunny banks and returning with hands filled with primroses. Bluebells, violets, forget-me-nots, butter-cups, daisies and cowslips will come to bear the primroses company. What pretty preachers you will have! What pretty sermons they will preach! Jesus saw the lilies, and told the people that if they would but listen, the lilies would say comfortable things to them about their Heavenly Father's love. I do not see why buttercups and primroses should not preach as well as the lilies.

How sweet it would be if we could only hear what the wild flowers say at a *love-feast* held in the shady woods on a sunny Sunday afternoon! I can guess what each would tell us: 'I am very little, but God cares for me,' says the daisy. A primrose speaks next: 'God saw my thin roots under the brown earth, and fed them with sap; then when I had peeped above ground I was kissed by the dew and warmed by the sun, till I am what I am; it is very wonderful; God is wise and good!' The timid violet is touched by the 'experience' of the primrose, and being just then moved by a gentle breeze shakes out a fragrant little speech: 'I do not know how I come to have so sweet a smell, made as I am out of coarse earth; I do not know how He does it, but I know the Father of the flowers does it somehow.' Cowslip, fox-glove and bluebell are all up together; their 'testimony' is very much alike: 'No hand but God's painted us, so that little children, when they see us, jump for joy.' Just at this point the flowers become conscious that there are spectators in the galleries, birds in the branches of the trees; the robin, the linnet, the thrush, and any number of sparrows, all ready to join in a song of praise. The thrush strikes the tune, and up rises a doxology of sweetness and song to our Father in heaven. A very pretty love-feast!

Will you 'consider' what the flowers say? God will be with you, my little readers, all through 1878. He cares for you, though you are *little*. He will give grace to *grow* in knowledge, wisdom, and love. He loves *beauty*, and will make you beautiful in devout, simple, childlike piety. Whilst you are reading these pages, the roots of plants beneath the brown soil are asking for warmth and moisture to make leaves and flowers. God will hear them. Begin the year by asking in secret that He Who clothes the lily of the field will give you His grace through 1, 8, 7, 8, that you may go on growing, and that your lives may be lovely with the beauty which parents, angels, Jesus and God the Father delight to see!

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EARNEST JOE.

LISTEN, boys, and I will tell
What I learned when young as you,
Would I other boys excel,
This advice I must pursue :
'Always try to do your best,
Whether in your work or play,
Earnest be, and never rest
Till you win the well-fought day.'
Lazy Ned, that has no care
Whether he succeeds or no,
Never can expect to share
Honours gained by earnest Joe.

Listless Tom, who puts no heart
Into sports upon the field,
Only knows the joys in part
Which the games to others yield.
Is a thing worth doing, boys?
Do your best and do it well;
He who all his powers employs,
Persevering, must excel.
Listless Tom will ne'er succeed,
Lazy Ned will never rise,
Earnest Joe will keep the lead,
He's the boy to take the prize.

REV. J. BRIGG.

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER I.—FLEDA'S WISH.

'PARLIAMENT!' exclaimed Fleda; and Alfred, Dick, Mary and Louisa all rushed after her to the sandy desert. These five children were playing in a large garden, to different

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parts of which they had given what they thought suitable names. At the farthest corner from the house stood a pretty arbour, with clematis, jessamine and nasturtiums climbing over it. It was agreed that each should be king or queen of the garden for a week in turn, during which time that one might choose the games, and the others were to obey, unless all four objected in formal council. The arbour was a nice place for holding consultation, but to-day 'Westminster Hall,' as they called it, was occupied by a personage of more importance than even queen Fleda, for her papa was sitting there.

He had just come back from a long drive; Fleda had been with him, and the others had finished their lessons while she was away, and were now playing at 'Puss in the corner' on the prairie. These children had read tales about America and other distant lands, so they called two grass-plots the 'prairie,' and 'the boundless prairie.' Across the latter they scampered till they reached the foot of the steep, rough hill known as the 'sandy desert.' A few trees, whose roots were long enough to strike down into the soil below, were scattered over it, but no plants like pansies or pinks would ever grow there. A large flat stone formed the seat of honour for the sovereign, and one could sit safely behind, with her foot resting against the stone; but the others had to hold on by the trees, or they would soon have slipped to the foot of the hill, where a furze-bush offered a warm embrace.

'Now, Fleda,' said Dick, when all were seated, 'what's Parliament about?'

'I thought you would like to know where I have been,' said Fleda, in a very dignified manner. 'I have been with Papa to Morland Castle.'

She was interrupted by exclamations of, 'You lucky girl!' 'I wish Pa had taken me too.' 'Did you go in?'

Mary did not say anything. As the eldest she would have scorned to envy her younger sister a treat.

'Papa went in, but he left me in the carriage at the front door. The grounds are lovely. There were squirrels in the trees, and deer and rabbits.

'All in the trees?' enquired Alfred.

'You know I don't mean that; what's the good of interrupting me? There is a beautiful garden, with a large, smooth lawn with white statues round it: and the honourable Ellen Morland was out there, with a bright steel bow, shooting at a target as big as the nursery table. There was a page to run and pick up the arrows, and she was playing in a dress quite as nice as my Sunday one.'

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'I never heard of a steel bow, Fleda,' said Alfred; 'what was it like?'

'It had a twist in the middle, like those we see in pictures of Cupids.'

'Is she a little girl?' asked Louie.

'She looks about as old as I am, and it made me feel very discontented. I don't see what right she has to wear her best frock to play in; and we have too few toys, and this rough grass, with the clothes-posts in, instead of a smooth lawn fit for croquet and archery.'

'Nonsense, Fleda!' exclaimed Dick; 'you know we always have more fun out of toys we make for ourselves than out of any we can buy; and as to mowing and rolling the boundless prairie, the idea is absurd.'

'It's all very well to say so,' returned Fleda, 'but I am tired of these old, shabby things, and I don't see why I shouldn't have a bow and arrows as much as Ellen Morland. I try to be a good little girl, and do as I am bid, and it is hard if I am never to have treats and nice things.'

'O, don't fret, darling; we all love you, and indeed we will make you happy again;' and little Louie, forgetting her unsafe position, loosed her hold of the poplar, and flung both her arms round Fleda's neck, who, being overbalanced, tried to steady herself by seizing Dick's arm, who, in turn, upset Alfred, and all four rolled to the bottom. Mary scrambled down and began drawing them out of the gorse.

'Children, are you hurt?' said a voice behind them; for Mr. Clifton had observed this untimely dissolution of Parliament.

'No, thank you, Papa,' was the cheerful reply, as they regained their footing.

'What was that grave consultation about?' asked their father.

It was so seldom that Mr. Clifton had time to notice his little ones during the day, that it seemed peculiarly provoking that he should do so now. But they had been trained to strict truth and obedience, so Fleda blushingly replied: 'I was telling them all I had seen at Morland Castle, Papa; and Louie was trying to comfort me because I wanted a bow and all the nice things little Ellen has.'

'My little daughter has had a peep into paradise, and found the serpent there,' said her father, gravely. 'Do you know that that very little girl you are envying envies you?'

'Envies *me!* O, papa!'

'She has no brother or sister, and she gets so tired of playing alone that she would willingly give all her expensive toys for a playmate. Sir Lionel thinks he shall have to find a little girl to live there, for Ellen frets till they are afraid she will be ill.

'Mamma says we ought never to envy people, because we cannot know what they have to suffer,' said Mary.

'But some rich children have brothers and sisters,' persisted Fleda.

'Yes, my dear, but they are sure to have some trial. I do not think there are many children really happier than you five, taking all things together.'

'I suppose you know best, Papa; but it seems as if I should be much happier at Morland Castle.'

'I think you would soon get tired of all the fine things and fret for your subjects, Queen Fleda,' returned her Papa, with a smile.

'I didn't mean I wanted to live there without all of you,' said Fleda, earnestly. 'We are very happy here, and I will try not to be such a silly girl.'

'I cannot afford to buy you all new toys,' added Mr. Clifton, kindly; 'and I would not if I could. It is so much better for you to be independent of them; you can be far happier, and make others so, far more easily than those who always have their play provided for them. There is the dinner-bell; meet me in the shrubbery after dinner, and you shall have some bows.'

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BEN'S TUMBLE, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

IT was an old cracked jug with a broken lip; but the boy who held it carried it with extreme care, eyeing its contents with great interest. So intent was his gaze, that he never noticed a ladder which was resting against a house, and stretched partly across the pavement, until he stumbled against it.

Of course he fell; there was a grand crash, and the jug and its contents were scattered far and wide. The poor lad picked himself up with a rueful face. As he surveyed the ruins of the jug, a sob, which although he was ten years old he could not keep back, escaped his lips.

'Hey day,' said a sharp voice behind him, 'what's the matter? a big boy like you blubbering. What's the use of crying over spilt milk?'

The boy turned round, and saw a funny-looking old gentleman, in a snuff-coloured overcoat and long drab gaiters, with pearl buttons. He was short and stout, and wore on his nose a pair of gold spectacles.

''Tisn't milk,' said the lad, simply; 'it's broth for mother, that Mrs. Perkins gave me, and she lent me the jug too, and she hain't got no more broth, and I've broke the jug;' and he looked as if the tears would break forth again.

'Come, come,' said the old gentleman, rather roughly, 'don't be a simpleton; your mother won't mind missing her supper for once, and twopence halfpenny will buy another jug.'

The boy shook his head. 'We aint got twopence 'appeny to buy another if it was ever so, and mother is bad, and has had nothin' to eat since early this morning. Besides, there's Totsy, and Nan, and little Will; I know they're rare and hungry by this time.'

'O, O! that's it, is it?' said the old gentleman, amused at the boy's ready confidence. 'Now, my lad, what's your name?'

'Ben Maxton,' answered he, proudly; 'and mother's name is Susan Maxton.'

'Maxton, Susan Maxton,' muttered the old gentleman. 'Ah, to be sure, I remember;' then fixing his sharp eyes on the lad, 'What was her name before she was married?'

'Susan Bates, Sir,' said Ben; 'leastways grandfather's name was Bates.'

'Then you may be pretty certain that was her name too, eh, you young rogue?' said the old gentleman, growing funnier every moment, and giving him a poke with his walking-stick. 'You say your mother is ill,' he continued, more gravely, 'and you are very badly off, eh? why, where's your father?'

'Dead, Sir,' answered Ben, sadly; 'and after he died mother broke down. The doctor said she was worn out with tending of him. She got better after a bit, but she's never been well since.'

'And I suppose she's pale and thin, and has a pain in her side, and coughs all day long?' interrupted the old gentleman, in a quick voice.

'Why, that's just what she's does!' said Ben, with an astonished look, which plainly said, 'How do you know all about it?'

'Well, my lad,' went on the curious old gentleman; 'what she wants is medicine, that's certain, so we must see about sending her the right sort.'

Before Ben could utter a word he trotted off, the buttons on his gaiters twinkling and winking in the gaslight, for it was a dark winter evening.

Beckoning to the boy to follow, and merely saying that they must find something to hold the medicine, he hurried on till they reached a shop where baskets of all description were

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'Hey day, what's the matter?'

See page 7.

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Cowper and his pets.

See page 11.

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hanging out for sale. Here his new friend paused, and astonished Ben by asking him if he thought they could get a bottle here big enough to hold medicine. Without waiting for an answer he entered the shop, and picking out a stout wicker-work basket, said, 'Lay hold of that, my boy,' at the same time putting the price marked on the counter. Then, in answer to Ben's wondering look: 'Yes, yes, this is the bottle to hold the medicine, now we'll see about the medicine itself.'

In speechless astonishment Ben followed his benefactor into a grocer's shop, and could hardly believe his own eyes when he saw the basket stocked with a pound of tea, a packet of sugar and a piece of bacon. Ben's face was a study while this was going on; and when he was told to take possession of the basket, he felt a strong inclination to throw his cap in the air, and give three cheers in honour of his kind friend.

What he really did was to walk out of the shop as soberly as his dancing heart would allow. When they reached the street he tried to blunder out his thanks.

'Hush! hush!' said the old gentleman; 'we haven't done yet;' and as he made his way towards a butcher's shop he continued: 'This medicine is a mixture, you see,' and he chuckled at his own joke. Ben said no more, not even when he saw the rosy-cheeked butcher weigh out a pound of beef-steak, and put it on top of the other things in the basket. When they were once more in the street, the old gentleman paused, and looking into the basket again, said: 'I don't think you have much room left, so make haste home with the medicine to your mother, and tell her to take good large doses as often as she wants it.' Then putting some money into the boy's hand, he said, 'There, that will buy some coal; I suppose you can light a fire, eh?'

'I should think I could, Sir,' said Ben, with glistening eyes; 'but please, Sir, do let me thank you for giving us all these lots of things. I feels it all the more, 'cause this morning mother prayed very earnest that God would help the fatherless, and give us our daily bread, and when I fell down and broke the jug I thought God couldn't ha' heard her prayers, or else He didn't mean to answer 'em. And now I feel how wicked it was of me,' he added, as the ready tears, not sorrowful ones now, rolled down his pale cheeks.

'Well, my boy,' said the old gentleman, in a wonderfully softened voice, 'this will be a lesson to you. Another time have more faith in God and your mother's prayers. Now trot home as fast as your basket will allow you.' Then turning back he said, 'Dear, dear! I had almost forgotten to ask where you live.'

Ben gave the name of a street in a very poor neighbourhood. As the old gentleman wrote it down in his pocket-book, he said: 'Tell your mother I am coming to see her to-morrow, and if she asks who sent her these things, tell her it was her old master: she'll remember, she'll remember.'

(*To be concluded.*)

A NEW YEAR'S HYMN.

SAVIOUR, now I kneel before Thee,
And Thy blessing I implore;
Weak and sinful, blind and wayward,
Guide and keep me evermore.

Children may be Thine, O Jesus!
For Thou lovest us to come,
In the arms of Thy compassion,
Thou dost make the children room.

All unknown the future waits me,
I am full of trembling fear;
But if Thou, my Lord, art with me,
This shall be a glad New Year.

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I would be Thine own, dear Saviour,
I would give Thee all my heart;
Shine upon me with Thy favour,
Let me never from Thee part.

Be my Guide, my Light, my Father,
Thy dear child I want to be;
Let me daily live to please Thee,
Jesus died to ransom me.

Thou didst give me much of blessing,
In the year whose course is run,
Holy Spirit, help and guide me
In the year just now begun!

Wash away my sins, Lord Jesus,
Let me feel that Thou art near;
Trusting in Thy love and mercy
This will be a happy year.

ETHELWYN.

THE POET AND HIS PETS.

No doubt many of our little friends keep rabbits, and are very fond of their docile yet lively pets; but none of you, I think, have kept pet hares, like the poet Cowper. I will tell you how it was that he became so much interested in those little creatures. Some children, whom he knew, had a leveret, which, you know, is a little hare; but though it was a nice plaything for a change, they soon grew tired of it, and their father seeing the poor little thing neglected, offered it, with their consent, to Mr. Cowper, who at this time was suffering from a strange and distressing mental affliction; and his friend hoped that the little amusement of tending and taming the leveret might prove an agreeable diversion from his own sad thoughts. Several more friends, who were glad enough to do anything for him, brought him other hares, till, as he said, he might have had enough to stock a paddock.

He selected three, whom he named Puss, Tiny and Bess. Bess was the largest and strongest, and at first the tamest. He would have made you laugh with his funny antics, as he frisked about the parlour; for after supper the hares were allowed to play in the poet's room. Puss at first was shy, like a wild hare, but his master's kindness soon made him feel at home, and he would jump upon his knee, and sometimes go to sleep in his lap. Once he was taken ill, so Mr. Cowper kept him apart from his companions; for hares, like many other animals, will persecute their sick friends. He nursed the little thing very carefully till he was well again, then the faithful creature showed his gratitude in the most unmistakable manner, by licking his master's hand all over, and then every finger separately. Sometimes the poet would take him into the garden, for he had become so tame that there was no fear of his running away. Puss liked this very much, and would ask to go out as plainly as if he could speak. How would he ask? By drumming with his paws on his master's knee, and looking up with an appealing expression that plainly said, 'Please take me out.' Then he would take Mr. Cowper's coat-tails between his teeth, and pull at them with all his might. The great attraction in the garden was a cucumber vine, where he would often lie all day until the evening.

Tiny was of a very different disposition: in spite of his master's kindness, he would not allow him to stroke his fur without a grunt; but even his solemn surliness amused the poet.

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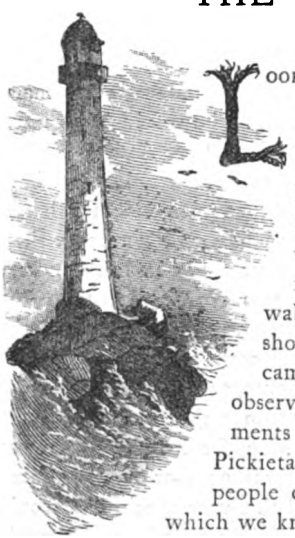
The three little animals lived a very happy life, and seemed quite to enjoy being domesticated. You will think they had good reason to be comfortable, when I tell you that their master himself made each of them a snug, cosy bedroom, with a bed of clean straw on which to sleep, and in the day-time they had a nice hall where they could play all together. Bess was the first to die; he caught cold one day after his bedroom had been cleaned, he having been put to bed before it was dry. Tiny lived to be eight, and Puss ten years old. When Tiny died, the poet wrote his celebrated Epitaph 'On a Hare,' which, perhaps, some of our little readers have read.

G. E. S.

THE FRIENDLY PICKIETARS.



LOOKING out, as usual, for specimens of any fresh animal, bird or insect, Mr. Edward, the Scotch naturalist, was one afternoon taking a walk along the seashore. He soon became interested in observing the movements of a number of Pickietars, as the Scotch people call the sea-fowl which we know by the name of Terns. A pretty sight it was to watch them fishing in the Firth, as they darted quickly into the water, or rose and rested on its surface to devour their prey.

After a while one of the birds broke off from his companions and began alternately to fly and swim towards the shore, fishing as he went. He was soon near enough for a shot, and Mr. Edward, wishing to secure the beautiful creature, fired. The ball broke the bird's wing, and he fell screaming down to the water. His cries brought the others to the rescue, and with pitiful screams they flew to the spot where the naturalist stood, while the tide drifted their wounded brother towards the shore. But before Mr. Edward could secure his prize, he observed to his astonishment that two of the Terns had flown down to the water and were gently lifting up their suffering companion, one taking hold of either wing. But their burden was rather heavy; so, after carrying it seawards about six or seven yards, they let it down, and two more came, picked it up, and carried it a little farther. By means of thus relieving each other they managed to reach a rock where they concluded they would be safe.

But Mr. Edward did not approve of losing his specimen in this way, and made for the rock. He was soon discovered by the watchful Pickietars, who now surrounded the rock in great numbers, and with screams and cries once more bore away their disabled friend right out to sea. Mr. Edward might have prevented them if he had tried; but he had too warm an admiration for the brotherly kindness of the birds, who, as he says, exhibited 'an instance of mercy and affection which man himself need not be ashamed to imitate.' Indeed, he was rather glad of the disappointment which had given him the opportunity of witnessing this remarkable scene.

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The wounded bird.

See page 12.

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THE UNWELCOME BABY, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

CHAPTER I.—EARLY SHADOWS.

'What a mercy it would be if that child should die. What a blessing if it could be taken away!' So everybody said, but everybody was wrong, as everybody often is; for that poor sickly little boy grew up to be the means of blessing to thousands, and children especially have reason to be thankful that that unwelcome baby ever came into the world; for this was JOHN TODD, who, when he grew up, wrote those wonderful *Lectures to Children*, which have so effectually sown good seed in so many young hearts. Most of you have read them, I hope, with as intense pleasure as we did in our childhood's days, when Todd's *Lectures* ranked high amongst our favourite Sunday-books.

But why did all the people want the dear little baby to die? Because his father, Dr. Timothy Todd, though he had been a most respectable physician, was unable to earn anything to support his wife and his children, of whom little John was the seventh. Shortly before the baby was born, he had met with a terrible accident which rendered him a helpless cripple. Sadder still was the case of John's mother, for alas! she had lost her reason. A kinder, better mother there could hardly be than Mrs. Todd in those rare, happy hours when she was like herself again, and the light of reason seemed to return; but these gleams were few and far between, and generally she was quite unfit to be with her children at all.

Can you wonder, then, that kind people trembled for the future of the helpless child, so mysteriously deprived of that greatest earthly blessing,—a good mother's care and training?

We will pass over the first six years of little John's life, which were spent at home in his father's house in the small town of Killingworth, near Vermont, in the United States of America. But a terrible shadow fell upon the household when John was about six years old. His father, who had never been strong since his accident, became very dangerously ill. One Sunday morning, when suffering terribly, he asked his little boy to fetch him some medicine from the druggist's. John took the paper on which the directions were written, and ran down to Mr. Carter's the druggist, but the shop was shut. Of course John ought to have gone on to Mr. Carter's house, which was about a quarter of a mile from the shop, but *he would not take the trouble!* 'O,' I think I hear you say, 'what a cruel, selfish boy he was not to get his poor father's medicine!' Yes, it was selfish and thoughtless, but little John did not mean to be cruel; like so many other boys who bring suffering upon others by neglecting their duty, he didn't think it mattered so much.

When John reached home, he found his father very weak and in much greater pain. 'My son has got the medicine, I hope, for I am in great pain,' said the sick man, eagerly. What could John say? Did he offer to go back at once and fetch it? No, he sowed the seed of bitter sorrow for himself by telling his dying father a lie: 'Mr. Carter says he has got none,' he stammered out. 'Has got none! is it possible?' said his father, with a keen look that cut his deceitful child to the heart; and then, in his mildest, kindest tone, he added, 'My little boy will see his father suffer great pain for the want of that medicine.' John went away by himself to cry, but was soon

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called back to the room where all his brothers and sisters were standing round the bedside, to catch their father's last words. Turning to his youngest boy, the tender father said, 'John, my dear, come and see your poor papa once more; in a few days you will see them bury him in the ground, and you will not have your papa any more. O, if you had a mother who could take care of you, I should leave you in peace! But why should I not now? That God Who feeds the young birds when they cry, and shelters the lambs from the storm, will surely take care of you, my own dear boy. Never forget that you have a better Father in heaven. Ask Him to take care of you and make you good, for Jesus Christ's sake. Love Him, obey Him, and always do right, and *speak the truth*, because the eye of God is always upon you.' And laying his hand on his little boy's head, he prayed that the blessing of God might rest upon him, so soon to be a fatherless orphan.

The poor little fellow rushed sobbing from the room. O, how he wished he could tell his father about his wicked lie, and hear him say he forgave it! but it was too late now; the exhausted man was too far gone to speak. At last in desperation John snatched up his cap and ran down to Mr. Carter's, got the medicine, and ran home with it and into his father's room, crying, 'O, here father!'—but he stopped; his voice could not pierce that solemn silence, for it was the stillness of death; and the last words John had spoken to his father were *a lie!*

Dear children, does this seem a very sad story? I have not told it you to make you feel gloomy, but because I trust the lesson of little John's trouble may be the means of saving you from little John's sin and sorrow. Remember you are now sowing seed that will bear very sweet or very bitter fruit in after years. You may not be left orphans as he was, your parents may be spared for many years; but whenever the parting comes, you will think, O! so sadly, of the times when any fault of yours brought sorrow to their hearts; and it will be such a comfort to recall any little deed of self-denial for their sakes. And if you should be taken away first, should you not like your parents to be able to say, 'Our precious boy never told us a lie;' or, 'Our dear girl was always ready to oblige her parents'?

Scripture Exercises for Young Bereans.

You all remember what noble acts of the Bereans are recorded and highly commended in God's Word: 'That they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily,' to see whether the wonderful doctrines that Paul preached agreed with the Old Testament Scriptures, with which they were so familiar. Now, we want you boys and girls to imitate those wise old Berean Jews, by searching the Scriptures for a good and definite purpose. For instance, we know that God's promises are true, but it is well to be able to recall cases in which they have been fulfilled.

Here is one: 'Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.' (1 Sam. ii. 30.)

Now take a precept: 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.' (Rom. xii. 21.)

A beautiful book will be given as a prize for the best list, and another for the second best list, of examples from Scripture of the fulfilment of the promise and threatening; and of the observance of the precept. Competitors must be under fourteen, and must ask a parent or teacher to certify that the answers have been found without assistance. The papers should be written on one side only, and sent to the Editor, 1, Grayling-road, Stoke Newington, not later than January 18th. The first prize-paper, with the names of the prize-winners, will appear in our March number.

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Winter's Monarch.

(*See page 2.*)

1. I dreamt of the Win - ter King one night; He
2. An an - gel, . stand - ing with fold - ed wings, Said,

stood ar - rayed in a robe of white; A hol - ly wreath, with the dew - drops
'This is the word of the King of kings: Go forth, O Win - ter, and do My

wet, By un - seen hands on his brow was set; And heaps of
will, Bid the flow - ing streams a - while be still; Let each blade of

crys - tals were scat - ter'd round, Just in the place where I saw him crowned.
grass re - ceive a gem, And each lit - tle flow'r a... di - a - dem.'

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FEBRUARY, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

'With a crash the window fell in.' *See page* 19.

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SATURDAY NIGHT IN TWO HOMES.

To most children the simple words 'Saturday night,' imply a great deal. A picture of this night in my own early home comes up in my mind.

It meant with us, as with most children, going early to bed, soap and water in abundance, the short play-time, merrier than usual, snatched as it were between the evening meal and the Sabbath rest.

After their happy play-time, the girls have their hair tightly curled with a profusion of papers, undergoing many a pull and jerk with exemplary patience. The little boys, after a process of hard brushing, washing and scolding on the part of the rather disconsolate maid, and on theirs of great resistance, appear with hands and nails clean enough to suit Mamma. The very tiny ones scrupulously washed and very pretty, with shining faces and bright eyes, in night-dresses white as snow, and warm shawls pinned to the throat, fastening therein arms and hands, are carried into the dining-room in that helpless, happy condition to bid good-night to Papa and Mamma, and to lisp their evening prayer by Mamma's knee. There is a scamper of little feet overhead, a prattle of tongues, a merry laugh, nurse's pleasant good-night, and a great hush after it all.

Each little occupant of its cosy crib so carefully pillowed, lies sleepless, and with wide-open eyes but quiet, except for a word or two in an undertone, for Mamma doesn't allow talking, and nurse bid them shut their eyes and sleep. So perchance the girls untwist their tightly-screwed curl-papers just a little, feel eased, turn over once or twice, smooth down the sheet many a time in a womanly fashion, meditate on dolls and dolls' houses, repeat softly every little hymn they know, till the sweet eyes close, and they are soon in the happy, heaven-sent dreamland of blissful childhood.

The boys, more impatient and more restless, are less inclined to make the best of it, and find divers ways of amusing themselves quietly. They examine the hands so white and clean. Dear, dear! how nurse did scrub! they wonder how Mamma keeps her hands so clean without scrubbing. They stare at the jet of gas, then half close their eyes, and at last sink into happy oblivion!

The tiny children do not find Saturday night so tiresome, for sleep soon visits them.

Best clothes, shoes, ribbons, collars, frills, are all laid out in readiness for early morn; for Sunday must be quiet, a day of rest. Everything best for that holy day most blessed of all! The nicest clothes, the prettiest books, the best stories, and above all, the sweetest, most cheerful tempers; no black looks, no frowns, no sulkiness, no discontent!

INNOCENT, HAPPY CHILDREN, FOR GOD'S HOLY, HAPPY DAY!

* * * *

Let me tell you of a very different Saturday night in a lone and humble home. On a bleak moorland, miles away from other human habitation, lived a widow and her children, the eldest a bright, affectionate lad of some eight summers.

When the wintry winds blew cold, and the great Ice-king passed by, 'twas hard work then. Small hands and feet grew blue with cold, keen, biting frost; for often there was scant fire in the grate, and a dearth of whole-

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some food. Little ones cried for bread, and down the mother's sad, wan face the great tears rolled.

The night I speak of was wild and stormy, the wind howled and moaned, and each gust seemed to shake the old cottage to its very foundation. The door creaked on its hinges, and the casement groaned and rattled at each succeeding blast.

Thanks to the charity of some kind heart, a warm fire burned brightly in the large open grate. A clothes-rail stood before it, on which sundry small garments were hung to dry. Though ten o'clock, the mother was washing that Saturday night.

The younger children were fast asleep; each pretty golden head had been as gently pillowed as are the children of the rich; perhaps more so, for a mother's hand had ministered to their wants, and her warm kiss lay on each little cheek.

Jim was wide awake, though, like the rest, in bed; he seldom went to sleep when they did, for he was his mother's companion, and he liked to lie awake and talk to her. As he sat up in bed watching his mother, he looked very happy and contented. His round face shone brightly with the usual Saturday night's washing, and his thick, short hair stood up all over his head in a half-dried condition. While he was looking at his mother he was thinking how much he loved her, for she was all the world to him. She was worn, pinched and thin, her faded dress clung tightly round her, and she wore no bright tie or pretty ribbon.

But there was nothing new in that to Jim, he was not used to seeing things pretty or fine. The mother felt their poverty keenly, but she didn't talk to the children about it. Mother-like, she wanted their lives to be sunny, happy and healthful; so within her own brave heart she carried her secret sorrow. Even Jim didn't guess, he half thought she liked their humble home; *be* did, why shouldn't she? The kitchen was large and bare, a table covered with a clean chintz cloth stood in the centre, and a low chest of drawers below the window contained the whole of the family wardrobe. Two or three chairs, a seven-day clock, an old-fashioned trunk, a plate-rack, in which was set crockery of various patterns and colours, the bed, and a little wooden cradle, composed the entire furniture of the room.

The patch-work quilt was of the mother's own work, almost the last relic of her early, happy days; the children loved that coverlet with its medley patterns and various shapes. But beneath the dear old patch-work quilt it wasn't very warm; the blankets were thin and threadbare, and sometimes the children awoke and cried with cold; but Jim never did, he tried to bear patiently the pain of chilblained hands and toes. He knew how their cries hurt mother, and made a strange, sad look steal into her loving eyes.

Jim's mother washed a long time, the clothes steamed before the fire, and he looked on; his stockings and shirt were in the suds, and so were the other children's (for they were so very poor), and the day following was Sunday, when every one should, if possible, be neat. They talked pleasantly to each other, their voices sometimes nearly drowned by the howling, shrieking blast without, till one gust fiercer than before shook the lone house, and with a crash the window fell in, and lay in pieces at the widow's feet. They were not frightened, only a little startled.

After many efforts the mother boarded up the window, finished her weary task, and lay down by little Jim. But after all her pains, a great space was left open to the sleet and rain, which came mercilessly drifting in. Poor Jim was cold, he couldn't sleep, but he was thinking, perhaps mother was too, for

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she lay awake; presently she heard Jim pray: 'O, Lord, have pity on them as haven't a good home like me!'

Dear little Jim! it was a kind prayer, wasn't it, and a thankful one too? But you know he had a tender, loving heart.

Long years have passed since then, and Jim has left his cottage home, bidden good-bye to want and hunger and the pain of poverty, but not to the tender memory of a mother's love.

In his childhood a witnesser of sorrow, he can feel for another's woe. His deeds of Christ-like love and prayers of faith bring down comfort and blessing on the suffering and the poor. LETITIA.

JESUS IN THE SHIP.

MOST terrible storm swept over our land six or seven years ago. Many a stately ship sank beneath the mighty waves, and many a poor sailor found a watery grave. The gale began early in the morning, and increased in intensity towards evening. The dreadful storm made us terribly anxious, and our hearts were very sad and fearful, for one who was very dear to us was out upon the sea. That afternoon our little one, a child about three years of age, came into my room and asked me to tell her a ''tory.'

'Tell you a story, darling,' I replied; 'what must the story be about?'

''Bout Jesus in de boat,' she answered, climbing up on my invalid couch. After she had settled her wee self comfortably, I began to tell her in simple language the wondrous story of Christ rebuking the wind and the sea. This was her favourite tale, and no matter how often we told it to her, she never tired of hearing it. On being told how the wind tossed the great white waves over the little ship, and how terrified the disciples were, and how the Lord Jesus stood up in the boat and stretched out His arm and stilled the storm, her large grey eyes would shine and her little face quiver with excitement, and always at the end she would say, 'And dere was a big tarm.'

It was customary for the little one to come to me morning and evening to say her prayers. As usual, that evening, I heard the pattering of tiny feet upon the carpet, and saw the little white-robed figure standing beside my couch.

'Tome to say my payers,' she said.

'Are you, darling?' I answered, 'kneel down, then.'

I stroked the fair silken hair, and said, 'Listen, Maude, to the wind, how it blows! Dear Papa is out in the storm; my pet must ask the good God to take care of him out on the sea to-night.' The tiny hands were folded reverently, and the beautiful grey eyes were raised in trusting faith to Him Who said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me,... for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' After repeating her customary prayer, which was fitting for baby thoughts and baby lips, she added this little petition:

'O God, please take tare of my Papa out on de sea to-night, and please bring him home safe to 'ittle Maude; for Jesus' sake, Amen.' Does she understand what she has been saying, I wonder, were my thoughts after she had said her 'good-night' to me and they had taken her away to bed. I cannot tell my little readers how wearily that night wore away, or how at every gust of wind a pang of pain shot through our hearts.

About midnight the storm seemed to have reached its climax. Just then a loud crash

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of falling masonry frightened the little one out of her sleep.

'What's dat?' she cried.

'Nothing, darling, that will hurt you,' replied her mother, soothingly; but she could not help adding, 'It is a great storm, Maudie dear, and Papa is out in it.' The child's answer astonished her greatly:

'Jesus is in de ship, Mamma,' she said, 'and Jesus put up His hand and say to de wind and de water, "Stop," and day did stop, and dere was a big tarm.'

O, great was little Maude's faith! and great was the comfort she brought us in that time of trial! 'Jesus is in de ship:' her words were bright shining stars of hope in the deep darkness of that midnight sky. The Lord had set this little child in our midst to teach us a great and never-to-be-forgotten lesson of faith. The little one's simple and beautiful trust in the Saviour rebuked us, and made us feel ashamed of our faithless prayers; 'Lord, increase our faith,' we cried. Many prayers have we offered up since that night, but the strong wing of faith is not so often clipt by unbelief as was the case then.

Our little readers will be pleased to hear that before many more hours had passed, wee Maude had the great joy of being clasped in the arms of her sailor-father. The merciful Lord had answered her prayers and brought the noble ship and all on board safely through that great storm 'unto their desired haven.'

O, little children, let us pray as Maude prayed, in perfect faith, believing in God's almighty power. Let us always remember that He Who for the sake of His terrified disciples rebuked the tempest of wind and water, is able to do so now. Let us pray *much* for those in danger on the sea, they need our prayers. A sailor once said that if there were more prayers, there would be fewer wrecks. O, little lambs of Jesus, let us ask more especially for our sailors that they may accept the eternal life which the Saviour longs to give them; for if they believe in His love He will save them from the greater storms of sin and death, and will bring them to the land where there is 'no more sea.'

NELLIE CORNWALL.

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BEN'S TUMBLE, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

(*Concluded from page* 10)

HEAVY as the basket was, Ben soon reached the miserable alley where his mother lived. With a joyous shout, Ben with his basket burst into the room, where sat a pale, sad-looking woman bending over her work, while three or four scantily-dressed children, all younger than Ben, were playing about the room. The woman's face showed plainly the marks of disease and suffering, while the listless air of the children, and the expression of little faces scarcely less white than their mother's, made up a most depressing picture of poverty. Upon this scene Ben's entrance broke like sunshine.

'Mother, Tot, Jim, all of you, only look here, see what I've got! a kind gentleman has sent you all this.'

The children gathered eagerly round him while he held up before their astonished eyes the bread, and steak, and the other contents of the basket. The poor little hungry things jumped for joy, while the mother's face lighted up with such a smile as it had not worn for many a long day.

'Why, Ben, where did you get all these things from?' enquired she, rather anxiously.

'It's all right, mother; I'll tell you all about it in a minute or two. Now, one of you youngsters, give me a knife;' and Ben cut great hunches of bread and distributed them among the half-famished group. 'Now, mother, I must make you a cup of tea and cook a bit of steak; for see,' said he, excitedly, 'I have plenty of money for coals; but I don't want to stop to buy coal now, I'll borrow a bit of Mrs. Brown, she'll lend me some, I know, and we'll get on famously.'

In a very short time a bright fire blazed and crackled merrily in the grate, and the poor ailing mother was enjoying a cup of hot tea and the meat that Ben had cleverly cooked on a piece of twisted wire. They did not possess a gridiron.

'Now, mother, I'm going to tell you *all* about it,' said Ben, slapping his knee impressively, and evidently enjoying his position. 'Now you little uns, be quiet and listen too.'

The profoundest and most respectful silence reigned as he began his story. His mother listened without saying a word, although her glistening eye showed her heartfelt gratitude; but the children, however, now and then gave vent to cries of delighted astonishment.

When Ben came to that part where the old gentleman said the good things were from her old master, Mrs. Maxton said hurriedly:

'My old master? why, I only had one master and mistress, Mr. and Mrs. Butler, for I was only in one place all the time I was in service, and there I stayed ten years. I left it to be married to your poor father, and very kind master and mistress was to me even after I left. But I never saw them agen after we came up here, when you was a baby, Ben. I've heard nothing of 'em since. Well, well, to think that old master should ha' turned up to help us in our time of need. How good the Lord is!' and the poor woman wept tears of gratitude and joy.

'Yes, mother, and he is coming to see you to-morrow,' said Ben, much impressed by this new turn of affairs; 'and perhaps he'll get you cured, and help me to earn enough to keep you and the little uns,' and he glanced in an affectionate and paternal manner at the three small dusky heads bobbing merrily in the firelight.

His mother smiled through a mist of tears, for Ben was only ten years old, but she did not discourage his ambitious hopes.

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'O, mother!' said he, earnestly, but with a penitent look on his young face, 'you know how you prayed this morning that God would help us in our worst need, and you asked Him not to forget the widow and the fatherless; well, when I fell down and broke the jug Mrs. Perkins lent me, and spilt all the nice hot soup she had given me on purpose for you, I *was* in such a way then; I felt downright bad, and such wicked thoughts came into my head. "Is this the answer to mother's prayer?" I thought; "what's the use of asking God to help us, He's got enough to do without noticing the likes o' we." And O! mother, before I had time to think any more, that kind old gentleman came up and asked me all about you, and took me right off and bought us all these things.'

'It wasn't right of you to doubt God, my boy,' said his mother, laying her thin hand on his head; 'but if ever you are tempted to do so again you will remember the great goodness He has shown us to-day, and it will help you to trust Him more than ever you have before. Come,' continued she, 'let us, before we go to bed to-night, kneel down together and thank our Heavenly Father for the many mercies sent us this day.'

And the pale mother, no longer sad, and her four little ones, knelt down to offer up their simple and hearty thanks to their good Lord. So the night fell happily on that humble garret-home. The next morning brought Ben's old gentleman. Very joyful was the meeting between Mrs. Maxton and her old master. This was the beginning of brighter days for the poor widow and her children, as Mr. Butler proved a kind and wise friend. Ben, although not quite able to earn enough to support the whole family, was able to do something towards it out of school hours. They did not stay long in that neighbourhood; for Mrs. Maxton, aided by proper medicine and plenty of wholesome food, soon recovered her old health, and, by the help of her kind old friend, obtained enough work to support her family. So they shortly removed to a better and healthier spot. In after years they would often look back and smile at the unexpected happiness which (under God) had been brought to them by 'Ben's Tumble.' AID.

THE GREEDY BIRDS.

WE know that Carrion Crows are fond of fish; but they are too lazy to fish for themselves, if by dint of force or manœuvre they can get hold of the hard-earned fruits, or rather fish, of another bird's toil. Our friend Mr. Edward, the naturalist, once observed one of these birds and two hooded crows flying after a heron who had been successfully fishing. They soon overtook him, and began various provoking assaults to make him drop his booty. One would fly above him, and then come swooping down with a sharp peck at the poor creature's head, while the second pecked him in front, and the third seized hold of his legs, and so they turned him over. At each of these somersaults his three tormentors would loudly caw, and almost laugh with delight. At last the poor heron was obliged to disgorge one of his fishes; but the crows did not get it after all, for it was quickly devoured by two magpies who had followed at a distance. Still the heron could not fly away; only a few yards was he suffered to move in any direction; so reluctantly another fish was dropped. This time one of the hoodies was sharp enough to see it, and picking it up, flew off. Now only two of the persecutors were left, but they continued the attack more fiercely than ever.

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The Greedy Birds.

See page 23.

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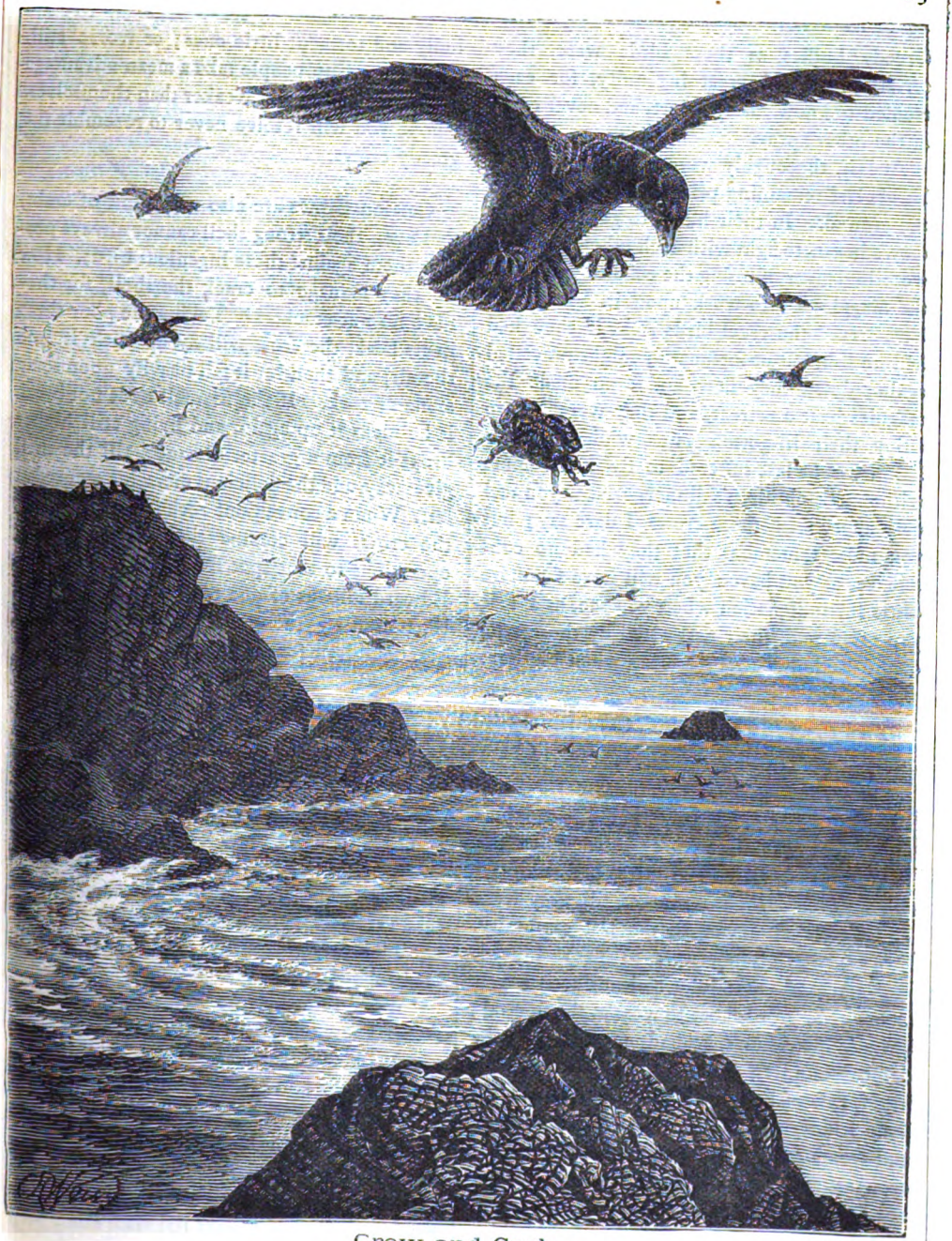

Crow and Crab.

See page 26.

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Greedy bullies as these birds were, they certainly showed great ingenuity, for each seemed to know his own part, and never came in the other's way.

At last, thoroughly worn out, the poor bird let his last remaining prize, a fine eel, fall to the ground. In their hurry to get it the two crows began to fight with each other, and they were in danger of losing the eel altogether, for the magpies set to work upon it. It would have served the cruel birds right if they had had no fish, but unfortunately might prevailed again; down they flew, and soon made the magpies beat a retreat, and they were left to enjoy their ill-gotten gains, while the poor heron was at last suffered to fly sadly home without his children's dinner. Now you feel very angry with those crows, I dare say; but you must remember that they had no conscience, as you have: you will have far more cause for indignation when you see, as I fear you often will, their part acted by those who ought to know better; I mean when big boys bully and torment little ones; or worse still, when grown-up people take a mean advantage over those poorer and weaker than themselves. I hope you will resolve never to resemble the greedy crows.

Carrion Crows are also very fond of crabs, and even their strong shell cannot always protect them against these ingenious birds. How do they manage to crack the shell, for they have no nut-crackers? Taking the poor thing in its beak, the crow will fly up with it into the air, and then let it fall heavily upon some stone or rock. If the first fall does not break it he picks it up again, and flying still higher drops it from a greater distance, till the shell gives way, and the delicious morsel is secured at last. When a convenient rock has been found, the crows will confine their shell-breaking operations to that spot for many years. Mr. Edward tells us of one rock which had been thus used by them and their children and grandchildren for twenty years!

THE UNWELCOME BABY, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

CHAPTER II.—THE POOR ORPHAN.

We told you that little John's family were poor, and now the father's illness had reduced their resources till they were almost at the last extremity. They were so poor, indeed, that John had not even a pair of shoes to wear at the funeral; but a kind widow who had come to help the desolate children in their time of need lent him a pair of her own little boy's shoes. The little fellow listened to all the Minister said, and wondered why he prayed so much about orphans, and whether his poor father would not feel cold and dreary in that dark grave alone.

In the evening John took back the borrowed shoes, and cried very much as he told the good widow about the funeral. And then the kind woman assured him that God would take care of him and be his Father.

'The very words my poor father said to me,' sobbed out John.

'Well,' returned the woman gently, 'your father knew what he was saying. He was a praying man. It is better than gold, John, to have prayers laid up for you in heaven. Now be a good boy, and you will be a good man; be gentle and kind to your mother, and never forget to say your prayers; now take this piece of gingerbread; good night, and may God bless you.'

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John never forgot this good advice; many years after, when grown up, he wrote: 'The poor woman has been dead a long time, but the words that she dropped live; and nobody can tell how much they had to do in forming the character of a Minister of Christ.'

One lovely evening, not many months after the sad funeral day, little John was lying on his father's grave weeping bitterly. He thought he was alone, but the clergyman who had been one of Dr. Todd's friends, happened to be in the churchyard too, and was very much touched by the poor boy's sorrow. Coming up he sat down beside him, and with tender caresses tried to comfort him.

'O, Sir,' cried John, 'let me cry for my father; I fear that I have offended him; that he will no more be my father; and I want to ask him to forgive me, and to kiss me as he used to do. O, if he would once more be my father I would never offend him! But they say he is dead. O, I would sit here and cry all night, I would never stop, if my poor father would come to me!' The kind pastor could not keep back his own tears of sympathy, as very patiently and tenderly he explained to the little orphan what death was, and how it came into the world. 'And now, my dear little boy,' he added, looking down upon the eager, questioning face beside him, 'you have indeed lost a tender father, but I have been trying to point you to a Father Who has promised never to forsake the poor orphan.'

'But,' asked the little one, 'what is it to be an orphan?'

'It is to be left destitute of parents while we are children.'

'But what is a *poor* orphan?'

'It is a child who is left destitute of property as well as parents.'

'O, I wish that I were a *poor* orphan, if God would be my Father!' exclaimed John, as the good man's tears fell again; he knew the wish would be fulfilled. Then they knelt together by the grave, the kind pastor and the *poor* orphan, and prayed that God would bless and provide for the fatherless boy.

The clergyman took little John home with him, intending to adopt him as his own son; but God had marked out another path for him. In a very short time his benefactor was called home to heaven. A kind aunt, his father's sister, now offered to take charge of the little orphan. She lived ten miles away from their home. It seemed a very long journey to the child, and he trembled all over as Cæsar, his aunt's black servant, rode up to the door. Little John was comfortably seated on a blanket which had been placed on the horse's back as a saddle for him, and Cæsar tried to allay his fears by telling him that 'Old Kate,' meaning his aunt, 'was very gentle to little boys, and would let him bring "Echo," his little dog, with him.'

So the three set off; John holding fast on to Cæsar lest he should fall from the horse, while Echo trotted beside them.

But soon it grew quite dark, for it was evening when they started, and the poor child felt frightened in the lonely woods. Cæsar was very silent.

'Cæsar, ain't we most there?' at length he tremblingly enquired.

'Yes, when we have got through the woods we shall see the candle in the house.'

'Won't they be gone to bed?' was the next question; for the little fellow thought that many hours must have passed since they entered the woods, and now it must be nearly morning.

'O no!' said black Cæsar, 'they will be all ready to receive us.'

At last the dreary woods were crossed and the welcome light visible, and soon they stopped at the door of the house. Little John was carefully lifted from the horse, and ten-

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derly kissed and welcomed. A bright warm fire and a good supper awaited the little traveller; and then he was taken into his new, clean bedroom, where his aunt undressed him and waited till he fell asleep, so that he might not feel afraid in the strange room.

Long years afterwards the kind aunt was herself fearing a journey which seemed to lie through a dark valley, 'the valley of the shadow of death;' and her nephew, no longer little John, but Dr. Todd, to comfort her, wrote his recollections of his childish fears, and added:

'Your Heavenly Father will send for you, a dark messenger it may be, but you need not feel afraid, for he will take you directly to your home. There the door will be open, and the Lord Jesus Christ will meet you and take you in; and the supper will be waiting, and the fires of love burning, and the light and glory of His presence all seen. Do not fear the dark passage nor the dark messenger. Receive it all as the little child did, and you will find the Home.'

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER II.—BOWS AND ARROWS.

AFTER dinner Mr. Clifton found the pine ready for him, and when he had cut nice branches they all adjourned to 'Westminster Hall' to watch him trim them.

'Papa, will common string do for them?' asked Louie, who had been rummaging in her play-box under the seat.

'Yes, if it is smooth and strong. No, that won't do, we must have better than that.'

'I say, Louie, you'll have to cut some of your hair off for yours, as the women in Carthage did.'

'Nonsense, Dick; why, hair would break directly.'

'Pa, is it nonsense?' appealed Dick.

'No, it really happened. A long while ago the Romans were fighting against Carthage, and they prevented any one getting

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into the city with supplies, so the women cut off their long hair and twisted it for bow-strings : twisting it made it firm and strong like rope.'

'I'll illustrate,' cried Dick, and seizing a golden lock he proceeded to twist a thick length of Louie's hair, and holding it so that she should not feel the pull, he showed what a strain it would bear. He did not hurt her, but she looked much relieved when he let go again.

Alfred's bow was finished, a notch was cut round the thick end to fasten the string in, and a bit of a branch was left at the top to fasten the looped end of the string.

'Papa, it's a deal harder to string a bow than I expected,' said Alfred.

'You have not tried the right way. Wait till they are all ready, and I will show you.'

'I shan't aim very high,' said Alfred, when all were finished, 'or I shall be sure to miss;' and Alfred sent an arrow a long way certainly, but flying very near the ground.

'If that is to be your life motto, my eldest son will be a disappointment to me,' said Mr. Clifton, laying his hand on Alfred's head ; 'you are not likely to attain much unless you aim high.'

'I will, father,' said Alfred, steadily, and Mr. Clifton was satisfied.

Meanwhile, Dick, after declaring his intention of aiming high, almost knocked himself over with the energy of his shot. His arrow flew up to the top of a poplar tree, and Dick started in pursuit.

'No, no, my boy,' said his father, 'I never let you climb the poplars.'

'But, Papa, I shall lose my arrow.'

'Very likely the wind will blow it down. You should aim at something and see that it is a proper object. I think we had better make a target.'

'May we chalk one of these clothes-posts, papa?'

The children drew up in a line, and each shot in turn at the mark on the post.

'Now, Louie, we've all missed,' said Fleda, consolingly, as she stood aside; 'so I suppose you will too.'

'Not a doubt of it if you try like that,' said her father; 'hold your bow in your other hand, you little Benjamite.'

What do you call me that for, Papa?' asked Louie, as her arrow fell about half-way to the mark.

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'The Benjamites were famous for "left-handed" shooting and aiming in general; we read of seven hundred who could sling at a "hair*breadth*, and not miss."'

'Morgan Jones is left-handed, then; he likes to write his copies so, but Mr. Gale won't let him.'

'It makes a man look very awkward to use his left hand *instead* of his right, but these Benjamites could use either. We make a distinction between a clumsy left-handed person, and one who is *ambidexter*, which means both hands right hands.'

'Then cook is ambidexter,' said Mary; 'she can scrub with either hand, and rest them by turns.'

'That is very useful; you may all train your left hands after your right are trained, but not instead of them.'

Mr. Clifton left them practising, but came back when the school-bell rang, to warn them all to unstring their bows.

'They would hang up so nicely as they are,' said Fleda; 'must we loose them, Papa?'

'If you don't they will lose all their spring,' said Dick, 'and be good for nothing.'

'We have just read a fable about that—Greek, you know,—and it compares an over-strained bow to a mind that is always kept at studies.'

'Fleda told us it was a steel bow she saw this morning,' said Alfred; 'I never heard of one before.'

'Yes, my boy, you must have done; don't you remember one mentioned in the Bible?'

'No, Papa.'

'Who knows what I mean?'

'I do,' said Mary. 'David said, "He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms."'

'Right, my dear. Lads, while you know more Greek than the girls, remember they have other things to learn that you need not, and don't let them outstrip you in Bible knowledge; I want you all to keep well up in that.'

The group separated for the afternoon; Mr. Clifton to teach the first class in his school, the boys to study under one of the young masters, and the girls to sew and read aloud with Aunt Lucy, their mamma's sister, who lived there and taught her nieces.

WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN.

THERE were five of us little folks: Mable, Lillie, Maggie, little Jim and myself. I, being the eldest, was seldom called by my Christian name, Alice; it was Sissie here, Sissie there, Sissie everywhere, until, I am sorry to say, I became sometimes a little impatient, much to the discomfort of my sisters and wee Jim.

We had a kind father and mother, and almost everything that heart could desire. I mean everything good for us. We lived in a large, old-fashioned house in a wide thoroughfare, in a busy part of a large, smoky town. At the back, closed in by high brick walls and large wooden gates, was a croquet-green, surrounded by paths and what were supposed to be flower beds.

Unfortunately, however, both for our health and that of the flowers, the sun rarely threw a ray of its gladness into our gloomy playground, it was truly like a quiet convent ground. Like the flowers, we drooped and sickened every now and then, and one of us, instead of playing and skipping on the green with the rest, might be seen pressing the pale little face against the high nursery window, and throwing kisses frequently.

We were very affectionate children. I may say it now without a blush, you know,

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for I am grown up, and do not feel as if I were praising myself. The little incidents I am telling you about took place so long ago, that looking back I seem as if I were talking about other little children, and not my sisters, brother, and myself.

I must tell you that once a week we received a penny for pocket-money; I being the eldest, when I reached the age of nine had twopence, an advance which pleased me much. No money I have now affords me half the pleasure.

We preferred purchasing one large plaything and sharing in the use of it, rather than each spending his or her money indiscriminately.

It was an exciting time when we opened the general cash-box; often almost at the last moment some kind friend would add a very handsome sum to the amount, making our young hearts dance for joy. Now and then we gave a small present to Papa or Mamma, and another time laid by our savings for some long-wished-for toy.

One dull January evening as our bed-time was drawing near, we crept close together on a low fender stool before the nursery fire. We were all flushed and animated, and talked long and earnestly, interrupting each other occasionally in our eagerness, and now and then jumping up by way of emphasizing any bright suggestion we might happen to make. We were consulting each other about our pocket-money. I, as treasurer, had the precious coins turned out on my lap.

'There,' said I, after counting our savings; 'three and sixpence is all we have; you have all of you drawn from the store several times.' I rose, and with a pencil in one hand and an old envelope in the other, heard the whispered confession as to what each one most wished for, then I returned to my seat and read the list. 'One of you wishes for a kite, another white mice, one of you a rabbit, and two a dog. Mable for white mice, Maggie the rabbit, Jim the kite, Lillie and I the dog.' After much talking on the part of us all, and a little disappointment to some, it was agreed to have a dog. At breakfast the next morning we told Papa, and asked him to get us a nice one. He consented, and we were satisfied.

Our dear good father, how he loved us! Many an hour in the long winter evenings did he play and romp with us in the old hall, the merriest of all. Of course, childlike, we anxiously awaited Papa's return at noon, expecting that he would bring our little pet with him. I need hardly say that he didn't. That dinner hour was not a very happy one, traces of tears could be plainly seen on the face of little Jim, and Mable couldn't eat. On the whole *I* got on the best, but I was the eldest, you know. Foolish, impatient children, to draw around us so great a cloud of fancied troubles. Two or three days passed, but no dog came. We tried hard to be patient.

Papa said, 'Nice little puppies were not to be had every day;' indeed, he had almost forgotten about it. I am sure he had no idea how our hopes could be so centred on a thing so small. But all repining was at an end when it actually arrived. We crowded round, and kissed and hugged it, smoothing its pretty head. Dear little puppy! the younger ones played with it the whole evening, watching its pretty gambols, and before they slept that night thanked God for their little pet.

We elder ones took care to make special friends with Hannah the cook, for to her care our treasure was entrusted. We loved it better than all our toys, for wasn't it alive?

It took some time to fix on a name for our dog. At last we called it 'Tip.' How much joy that little creature brought into our child-life, I couldn't tell you; looking back upon it all, it seems really wonderful how so small a thing could fill so great a space in our hearts.

(To be continued.)

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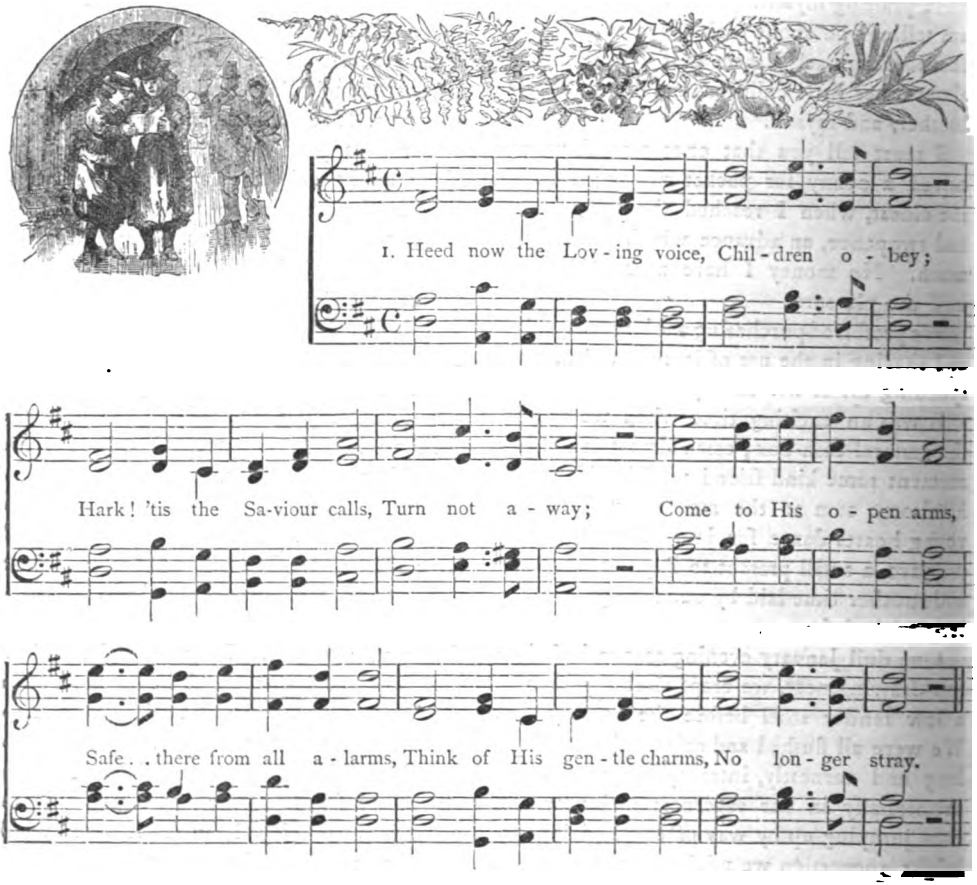
An Invitation for the Little Ones.

1. Heed now the Lov - ing voice, Chil - dren o - bey;
Hark! 'tis the Sa-viour calls, Turn not a - way; Come to His o - pen arms,
Safe . . there from all a - larms, Think of His gen - tle charms, No lon - ger stray.

2. Hear now the Holy voice,
Quiet its tone;
Little children, come to Me,
Stray not alone;
Come in life's early hour,
Ere Satan's wicked power
Makes you in evil cower,
Or anguish moan.

3. Joy, rest, and peace may be
Thy portion here;
Jesus, the loving Lord,
Would quell thy fear.
Yield to His earnest call,
Make the Saviour all in all;
Low at His footstool fall,
For God is near.

4. Live! live to Jesus now,
For life is short;
Let thy best youthful days
To God be brought.
Victory shall be given,
Endless joy be thine in heaven,
If thou hast nobly striven,
And bravely fought.

5. Only a few brief trials,
Then pain shall cease;
And thou with Christ shalt reign,
Joy shall increase.
Love be thy watchword now,
Then upon thy spotless brow
Crown of life will Christ endow,
Heaven's own peace.

ETHEL WYN.

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MARCH, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

'Do'e want any cockles to-day, plaise, ma'am?' *See page* 34.

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ZACCHY TROUNCE, THE WEE COCKLE BOY.

o'e want any cockles to-day, plaise, ma'am? beautiful, vresh cockles?'

The speaker, who was standing on the door-step of a pretty ivy-clad cottage in a little seaside town in Cornwall, was a mite of a boy, with a mop of tangled fair curls, and a small thin face, blue and pinched with the cold.

'How sadly neglected the child looks,' thought Miss Trebartha, to whom the words were addressed. There he stood before her, that bitterly cold March morning, with a basket of cockles in one red, chilblained hand, and an old tin pint cup in the other, while his garments hung about him in rags and tatters.

'Yes, my boy,' she replied, 'I will have some of your cockles; but, surely, you have not been getting them on such a cold day as this?'

'Iss, missus, an' they be quite vresh too, I 'sure 'e, an' only penny a pint,' he replied eagerly, thinking the lady suspicious as to their freshness. 'I went pickin' 'em this mornin' afore day.'

'Poor child!' said Miss Trebartha, kindly, 'come in; it is too cold to stand here on the steps. What is your name?'

'Zacchy Trounce,' returned the boy, following her to the dining-room door.

'Well then, Zacchy, put your basket and your boots on this mat, and come in here, and sit by the fire and warm yourself,' she said. 'Now I will go and fetch a pan to put the cockles in.'

When Miss Trebartha had left the room, little Zacchy spread his cold hands over the fire, which was burning brightly, and glanced admiringly around him. 'O my! ben't it all grand! I should like to live heere always!' he ejaculated. Certainly the bright cheery room presented a great contrast to the bleak, cold appearance of the outer world.

Soon Miss Trebartha returned, bearing a bowl of soup.

'Do you think you could manage to eat this?' she asked.

Nothing loth, Zacchy took the bowl containing the nice hot soup. Miss Trebartha seated herself in an arm-chair opposite him, and watched the quaint little figure in silence. After a time, when most of the soup had disappeared, she asked him, 'Whose little lad are you, Zacchy?'

'Eber Trounce's, missus,' he answered quickly.

'What is your father, Zacchy—I mean, what does he do to get a living?'

'Faather is a fisherman, missus, and he hes a fishin'-boat, caalled "The Wild Duck."'

'How is it, then, that *you* have to catch cockles and sell them, my child?'

''Cause if I didn't I shouldn't have enough to ait, an' I couldn't get anything nice for Benny, for faather spend amost all he gets at the public-house.'

'Ah!' thought Miss Trebartha, 'this accounts for the rags and tatters, and the wee thin face! O, the woe, the woe caused by the drink!'

A moment's pause and she continued her questions: 'Who is Benny, dear?'

'Benny is my twin-brother,' he replied, 'and he is very bad; Mammy says she es afeerd he will soon die. O! I hope he wen't go an' die, 'cause I loves him so, an' he would be dreadful *wisht* in the churchyard by hisself, an' the wind moans an' groans so there amang the trees; Benny cen't abide to heere it; an' O! missus, I should be so wisht, O, *so* awfully wisht, without him!'

Miss Trebartha was deeply moved, and

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she replied very tenderly, 'Poor little Zacchy! maybe Benny won't die just yet, and perhaps God will spare him to you. What is the matter with him?'

'I den't know, missus,' he returned; 'but he gits thinner an' thinner every day, an' he den't get up now, only when Mammy takes him up in her arms, an' he wen't eat anything hardly, not *even* the gingerbread-donkeys I gits him, nor the lovely gingerbread-men wi' the gould paper on 'em, and Benny used to *deerly* love gingerbread-donkeys, but now he cen't eat a leg o' one—so he must be very bad.'

Zacchy's pathetic little voice brought up a lump in Miss Trebartha's throat.

'Poor little Zacchy!' she said again. 'Does Benny know the *Friend* of little children, I wonder?'

'Who, missus?'

'Jesus, my child; the Lord Jesus, the Friend who loves the little ones.'

'No, missus, he den't; Benny hes only Mammy an' me an' Phebe to love him.'

'It is very sad, then, for little Benny, and for everybody, that does not know this loving Friend.'

'Why, missus?' he asked.

'Because,' answered the lady, '"Whosoever liveth and believeth in" Jesus "*shall never die.*"'

Zacchy glanced up from the last spoonful of soup which was being conveyed to his mouth, and with a look of wonder in his eyes he cried, '"Shall never die! never die!" O, missus, where do Jesus live? I want to know, that Benny may never die.'

'The Lord Jesus lives in heaven, Zacchy.'

'In heaven! why that's a long way off, en't it? an' I can never get up there to ax Him, an' poor Benny will die.'

'Benny need not die, Zacchy; for although Jesus does live in heaven, He can *hear* you; indeed, He is in this room now, just waiting for you to ask Him for the eternal life.'

Zacchy's eyes wandered around the room in search of Him, and when they had peered into every corner, they returned, and rested on Miss Trebartha incredulously.

'Thee have been a-foolin' me, missus,' he said.

'I am not fooling you, child. Let me tell you, Zacchy, that the Friend of whom I have been telling you is God's Son; and, therefore, with Him *nothing* is impossible. He is everywhere present, my boy. He hears all you say, He sees all you do, and He knows all your thoughts. He loved us all so much that He came down from heaven to die a dreadful death upon the cross to save us from dying for ever. But, Zacchy, have you never been told this wondrous story of all He did for us?'

'No, missus,' he answered, 'nobody has tould me about it thet I knaws of.' And Zacchy looked perplexed.

But surely some ray of Gospel light had shone into the darkness of his soul!

'Zacchy, would you like me to go and see your little sick brother?' was Miss Trebartha's next question. 'I should like much to see him if he would let me come.'

'O, iss, missus, plaise do'e,' he replied eagerly. 'Benny will be fine an' glad to see 'e.'

''Tes time for me to be going,' he said, getting up from his seat, and stepping again into his shoes. 'Thank 'e, missus, fer yer kindness an' the aitables. May I come again?'

'I want you to come next Sunday afternoon, Zacchy, at three o'clock, and I will explain to you what I mean by "eternal life."'

'Thank 'e, missus, I'll try and get off then;' and with a light basket and a lighter heart, Zacchy ran away.

(*To be continued.*)

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WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN.

(*Concluded from page* 31.)

At one time our house became infested with rats and mice; so to do away with so great an annoyance, poison was strewn plentifully about, here and there, on pieces of meat and tasty lumps of cheese. Papa and Mamma were from home, or greater precaution would have been taken. As it was, Hannah, the cook, had the whole management of it all from beginning to end.

Alas! poor Tip feasted with the rats, and, like them, suffered the penalty of his sweet morsel. We all stood round him sobbing, as he lay, first in the cook's arms (for our grief touched her heart), then on the hearth in the kitchen.

We watched him all the long while he was dying. The last shudder ran through his frame quick as an electric shock, and he lay dead. Our pretty puppy was gone! Cook, grown tender-hearted, would have done anything to bring him back. She had forgiven him the dirty paw-marks on her hearth. We all in turn crept close up to stroke him, and hid our faces on Hannah's fat shoulder, and there wept out our great sorrow. Yes, Hannah was kind that day, almost motherly.

To assuage our grief, as a special treat, cook consulted with the nurse and housemaid, and we were allowed to remain up an hour later that evening. Mistaken kindness! there we sat, listless, tearful, disconsolate; better far that every little head had been softly pillowed, and every weary heart-grief forgotten in sweet dreamland.

Next morning all in the house (all the grown-up folks, I mean) were bustling about, preparing for the return of Papa and Mamma. Glad to get us out of the way, nurse tied on our garden hats and sent us into the playground. There, under an old apple-tree, lay poor Tip. I proposed that we should bury him, but the little ones sadly wanted to keep him above ground and pet and nurse him as usual. However, being fully persuaded by me, that John the gardener would be sure to bury him if we did not, we agreed to undertake the mournful task.

With much perseverance and trouble we managed to dig a hole large enough to hold two such dogs as Tip. Gently we laid him in, and then stood round, looking our last at the dearest, sweetest plaything we ever had.

In the midst of our task, Mable was called in to be dressed for dinner; accustomed to obey, she went at once. During her absence we finished our work, and on her return were patting the earth down smoothly and tenderly.

Poor little six-year-old Mable, she gave a great sob! Filled up, and she not there, she who had loved him so! Don't laugh, it was an early grief, and none the less bitter for that.

We were hardly dressed for dinner before Papa and Mamma returned. We told them about our loss. Of course, they could not bring Tip back again, and our hearts were too pained to care for another pet; but we felt comforted, and the great healer, Time, brought us back our joy.

LETITIA.

THE UNWELCOME BABY, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

CHAPTER III.—LIFE AT KILLINGWORTH.

Little John was, on the whole, very happy with his uncle and aunt, or rather with his aunt alone, as was more frequently the case; for his uncle, being a sea captain, was very often away on his voyages. 'My uncle and aunt,' he says, 'were very kind to everybody and everything. No one had so many martin birds in their red box at the end of their

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little red house; no one had so many pets that seemed to love them, as they had.'

But among all the birds that built nests near that red house, the favourite was a curious little creature known as the phœbe-bird, from her cry of 'phœbe, phœbe,' which was the only note she had. For seven summers the bird had settled in the same place, and had grown quite tame, and there she reared a family of little phœbes. But one unlucky day, just after Phœbe had returned to her summer quarters, John was amusing himself by throwing stones near her nest, while Phœbe was perched on a post close by. Now throwing stones, you know, is dangerous sport, and John was only too expert in that mischievous art. At last, the thought struck him that he would make a target of old Phœbe, not because he wanted to hurt her, but only to see if he could hit her. Very skilfully he aimed, and the missile struck poor Phœbe on the head, and she fell dead at his feet. Then her desolate mate came round crying piteously, 'Phœbe, phœbe,' till John felt 'real bad,' as the Yankees say, and would have given almost anything to bring the bird back to life again. 'That stone,' he wrote after he had grown up, 'rebounded and hit me. How deep a wound it made in my memory! For fifty years I have carried it, and I would make great sacrifices to-day if I could undo that one deed.'

It was a quiet, primitive life that the people led in North Killingworth, the hamlet where Mrs. Hamilton, John's aunt, lived. The families who dwelt in the scattered houses among the little glens would drive to the old-fashioned meeting-house in little ox-carts; while in winter, ox-sleds would be used instead. But the lads and lassies, who were within even a very long walk of the place, would come on foot: the young ladies wearing their week-day shoes till they came near the meeting-house, when they would change them for their best, which they carried with them, and then safely deposit the others in a hole in the wall, where they always found them on their return, for there were no thieves in the little community.

Our young friend did not eat the bread of idleness. As soon as he was old enough to work, to work he went with a will; for there were many things that a handy boy could do on the farm, which his aunt managed while her husband was away. But at length trouble came to this happy family. The captain, on one of his voyages, was taken

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prisoner by the Spaniards, and Mrs. Hamilton, having no money coming in and finding farming not a quickly-paying business, was obliged to break up her house for the winter. A situation was found for John with a cousin, called Mr. Evarts, who was a lawyer at Newhaven, a town some distance from Killingworth. This was a thorough change for the boy, for the work here was of quite a different character from the out-door occupations to which he had been accustomed. Waiting at table, doing light work in the house, or running errands, filled up his time. A large, handsome college stood opposite the house where Mr. Evarts lived, and very often some of the students would come and dine with him. As little John used to stand behind his cousin at table, attending to his duties, and yet drinking in every word of the conversation, a strong desire grew up in his mind to go to College himself, and then perhaps some day he would become a great man. But how was he, a penniless orphan, to get money enough to keep himself at College? Could the wish ever be more than a wild-goose scheme? Read to the end of my story and you will find out.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

I.—A TALK ABOUT THE TEN LEPERS.

HILL FARM was the home of a good Methodist Local Preacher named Jonathan Hough. He was a widower with three children, the eldest of whom — Katie — was thirteen, the next—Willie—was nine, and the youngest—Pollie—only seven. Their mother had been dead about five years; and during that time Farmer Hough's sister had lived with them, taking care of the motherless little ones, who soon learnt to love Aunt Kate dearly. I could tell you a great many things that the children said and did if I had time, but I want to-day specially to let you know how they spent their wet Sundays—those days that are so often dull and dreary to little folks.

Hill Farm was some miles from the nearest chapel—an old-fashioned stone building in which Mr. Wesley himself had once preached. When it rained very hard, and especially on the cold winter evenings, our young friends were obliged to stay at home. Then it was that Aunt Kate's Sunday Scrapbook was called for, and as they sat round the bright kitchen fire they talked together of the Bible stories which the pictures illustrated. I am sure they will not mind our listening to them.

'Our story to-day,' Aunt Kate began, 'is that of the Ten Lepers.'

'What are lepers, Auntie?' said little Pollie.

'O, I know!' cried Willie, 'they are animals something like tigers, only spotted instead of striped.'

'No, no,' said Aunt Kate, 'you are thinking of *leopards*, Willie. A leper is a man or woman suffering from a very horrible disease called leprosy. You will read a great deal about it in the Bible, and in almost all books written by travellers in the East. It was such a dreadful thing that when any one became leprous he was at once separated from the company of healthy people, and never again, unless cured, allowed to live with his friends.'

'What a terrible misfortune it must have been to be leprous,' said Katie; 'and did they never get better?'

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'Well, we never read of a leper being cured by taking ordinary medicine; but surely you can think of several who were healed by God. Don't you remember one who is mentioned in the history of Elisha?'

'O, yes! you mean Naaman.'

'Yes; and then there was Miriam, the sister of Moses, who was smitten with leprosy as a punishment for her sin, and who was cured when Moses prayed for her. Then, too, we read in the New Testament of several lepers who came to the Lord Jesus, and were healed by Him. Katie had better read the story of these ten lepers. It is in St. Luke's Gospel, in the seventeenth chapter, beginning at the eleventh verse.'

So Katie read: 'And it came to pass, as He went to Jerusalem, that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off.'

Here she stopped, and asked, 'How was it that there were so many together, Aunt Kate?'

'Because these miserable people were not allowed to come near healthy folk; they could only associate with those who suffered from the same disease, and it was a very common thing for them to wander about in small bands, begging. You will see in our picture that the man who kneels before our Lord has thrown down on the ground the small bowl in which charitable people put the money they gave him.'

Katie went on: 'And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go, show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that as they went, they were cleansed.'

'Why didn't Jesus cure them at once?' asked Willie.

'I think He wished to see whether they had faith enough to believe His word before they saw it fulfilled.'

Again Katie read: 'And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.'

'And didn't the other men come back to say "Thank you" to Jesus?' asked Pollie, indignantly.

'What a shame!' cried Willie; 'but I suppose they forgot.'

'Perhaps they were so glad,' Katie suggested, 'when they found themselves cured, that they couldn't think of anything else. You know when father brought me that lovely work-box, I ran off to show it to you, Auntie, without saying a word to him; and when he asked me if it wasn't worth "Thank you," I felt so sorry, because it was only my being so pleased to have it, made me forget.'

'Well, I hardly think that that was the reason of their ingratitude, because they must have known that the Samaritan had gone to thank the Saviour. As soon as he was cleansed, he "turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." They had all "lifted up their voices" to ask the Lord to have mercy upon them, but only this man was as loud in his praise as in his prayer.'

'It would have served them right if Jesus had made them all lepers again,' Willie said.

Katie answered quickly: 'O! but that wouldn't have been like Him, would it, Auntie?'

'No, dear, not at all like the loving Saviour. If He were to take back all the blessings for which we do not thank Him, I

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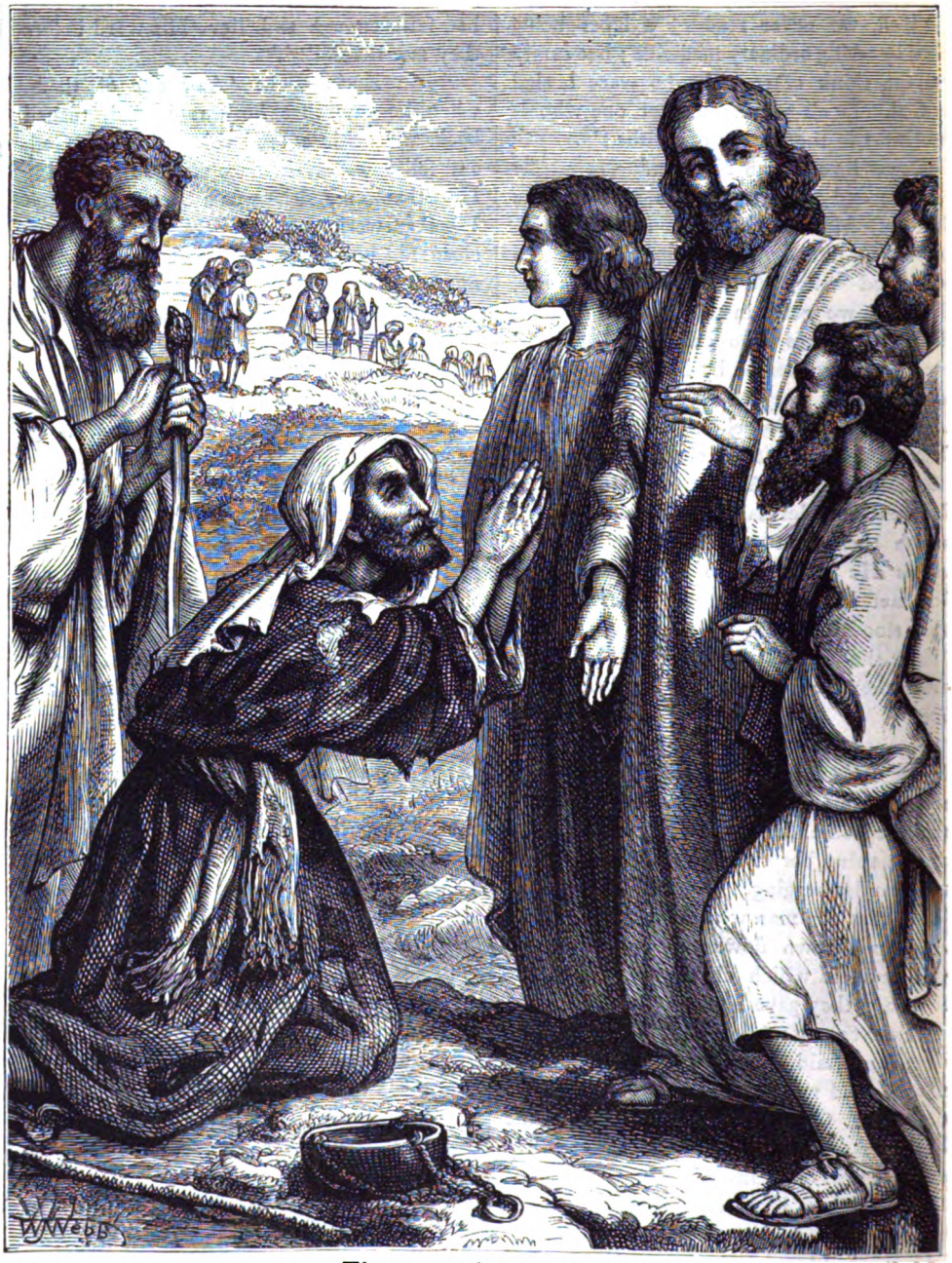

The grateful Leper.

See page 39.

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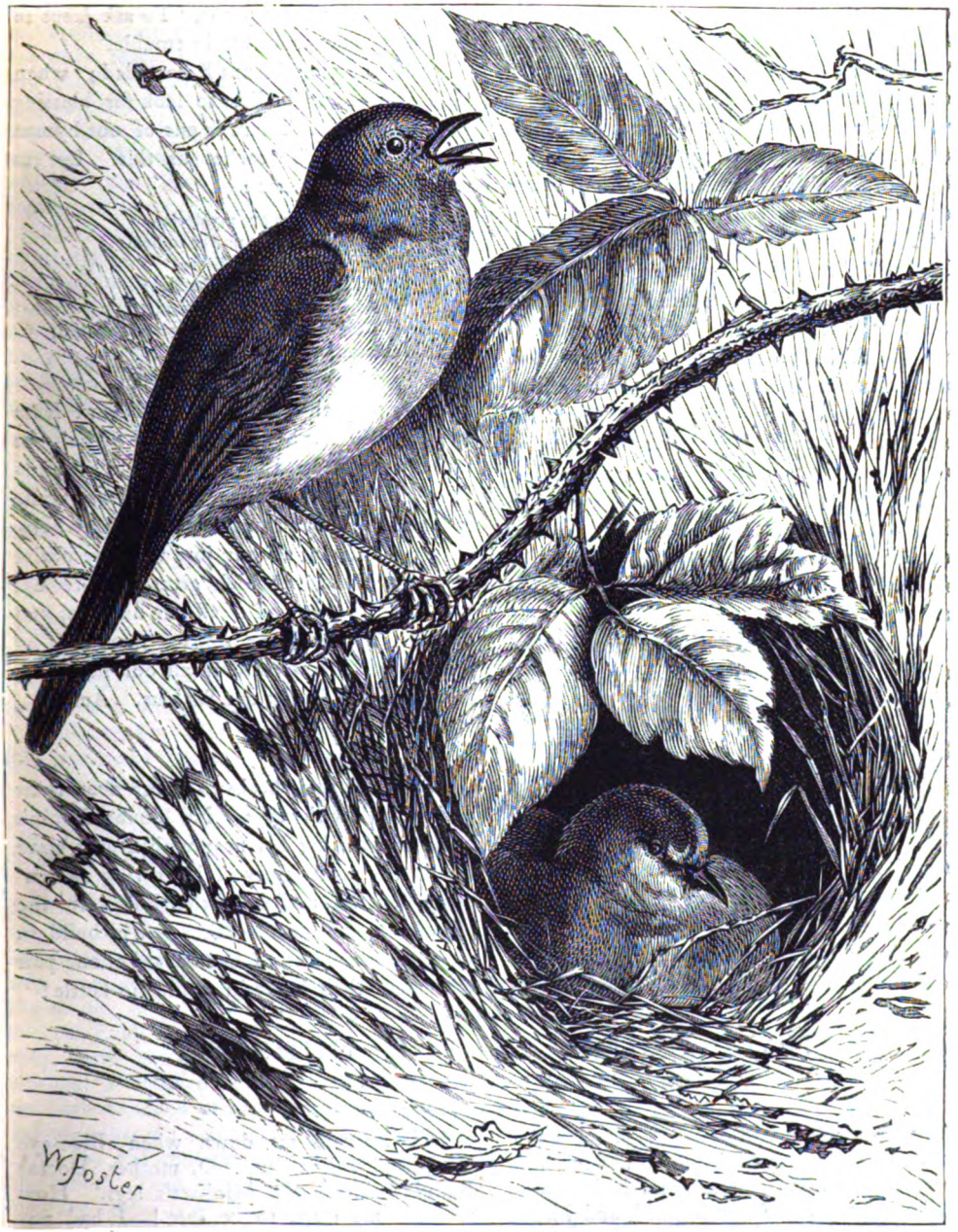

The Robin's Nest. *See page* 42.

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fear we should have very few left. No doubt He was grieved when He asked, "Where are the nine?" and no doubt our artist is correct when he represents St. John standing at the Lord's right hand, as looking after them sadly and reprovingly; and I think the nine lost something that the grateful Samaritan received.'

'They wouldn't feel so nice and comfortable inside,' said Pollie, gravely.

'No, indeed they wouldn't; and more than that, I think that when Jesus told this man his faith had made him "whole," He meant that he had been cured of something more than his leprosy—the Good Physician had healed his soul. Now let us each mention some lesson we may learn from our story.'

'To say "Thank you," when any one's kind to us,' said Pollie; who always answered first, that the others might not give the simple facts, which were all that she could clearly grasp.

'To believe what God says directly, and do what He bids us without asking any questions,' said Willie.

Katie said, after a pause, 'To ask Jesus to help us whenever we are in trouble.'

'And one more,' Aunt Kate added; 'when God blesses our bodies, to look for blessing to our souls too. There is one of our hymns (No. 693) which teaches us this. Let us read the second verse:

'"All Thy cures are mysteries,
And prove Thy power to heal
Every sickness and disease
Which now our spirits feel:
Good Physician of mankind,
Thou wilt repeat Thy sovereign word,
Chase the evils of our mind,
And speak our souls restored."'

Then they all knelt down, and Aunt Kate prayed: 'O Lord, we pray Thee to help us to learn by heart the lessons of Thy Holy Word. We thank Thee that we may come to Thee in all our troubles and ask Thy help. O grant that in all our joys we may praise Thee for the love which gives them to us! and that being healed of all our diseases, and cleansed from all our sin, we may be Thy faithful and loving children all our life long, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.'

THE ROBIN'S NEST.

OUR artist has drawn you a picture of a Robin's nest which he saw in one of his morning walks. You see our little favourites know how to make themselves comfortable. They generally build on the ground, at the roots of trees, and try to hide away the nest amongst grass and leaves. If there are none at hand, the birds will bring dry leaves in their beaks to cover over their pretty yellowish eggs. No doubt Robin's habit of covering his nest with leaves gave rise to the pretty story of his caring so tenderly for the bodies of the Babes in the Wood. Sometimes Redbreasts will build in very strange places. I have heard of one pair who made their home in an old tin kettle!

HALF-HOURS IN THE NURSERY.

BY THE REV. J. COLWELL.

I.—DOCTOR BUNNIE

A LITTLE while ago I called to see a sick member of my flock. I did not see him, however, for he was better, and had gone to his business. But I saw his wife and his six little children. And I saw something else. I had scarcely sat down when Blue-eye Curlyhead called out, 'O, mother, Doctor Bunnie is biting the Minister's legs.' How it made me start, to be sure! I had not felt anybody biting my legs, but I jumped

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up in a moment, and looked under the chairs and table; but no, there was nobody there, the only thing I could see was—what do you think?—a rabbit. I suppose I looked very surprised, for the mother said, 'Yes, Sir, that is Doctor Bunnie. He is very tame and playful. When he shakes his head, his grey whiskers make him appear as solemn as an oracle, and so we call him "Doctor Bunnie!"'

Of course these children often talked about their pet, and one day their Uncle John—who sometimes came to see them—promised to tell them some lessons they might learn from Doctor Bunnie, and especially from his cousins that ran wild in the fields and woods; and, above all, about Jesus as the Saviour of weak little children.

'O!' they all cried out together, 'how can Doctor Bunnie teach us about Jesus or children? What does he know about such things as that? and if he did he couldn't tell us, for he can't talk.'

'There are a great many things that cannot talk that can teach us,' replied Uncle John; 'and I am not the first either that has tried to draw a lesson from a rabbit. If Nellie will take her Bible and read to us the twenty-sixth verse in the thirtieth chapter in the Book of Proverbs, you will see that.'

Nellie read: 'The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks.'

'Now you see—'

'*I* don't see,' said Tom, the eldest boy, 'for our teacher told us the other day that a cony was *not* a rabbit.'

'And your teacher was right,' replied Uncle John. 'You must not think you have caught me, Master Tom. The Hebrew name of the little creature is the *Shaphan;* and the wise men who translated the Bible thought it meant the rabbit, so they called it coney—which is the old English name for that animal. And they were not far wrong, after all; for although a Shaphan is not a rabbit, yet the two are so much alike,—especially in their habits,—that we may draw the same lessons from the one that the wise man drew from the other. Tom will, I dare say, remember that the rabbit is so much like the Shaphan, that those grand old sailors, the Phœnicians, were deceived by it; and when they first visited the country we call Spain, they found it so overrun with rabbits—which they thought to be shaphans—that they called it Shaphan. From that it was called Hispania, then Spa-an, and at last, Spain.' *

But as Master Tom did not remember, he said nothing, but allowed Uncle John to go on with his story about the lessons to be learnt from Doctor Bunnie and his cousins.

'I. *The first lesson Doctor Bunnie teaches us is that all* LITTLE PEOPLE HAVE MANY ENEMIES. —Rabbits have many enemies; so have little children.

'The greatest enemy of the rabbit is man. In certain places he is bound to destroy them in self-defence; for they are sometimes very naughty. They eat a great lot of corn and other things. So the farmer hunts them with dogs, and catches them in traps, and—worse than all—shoots them with guns. Then they are pounced upon by the kite, attacked by the weasel and the fox, and destroyed by other enemies of various kinds. So you see they have a hard time of it.

'But little children have even more enemies than the rabbit, and they are far more dangerous.

'I want you to remember that you have many enemies, because if you forget that, it will be all the more easy for your enemies to do you harm. A little boy I once knew was sent out on an errand one dark night. He was very much afraid, and when he came back I asked him how he had got on.

'"O," he said, "I shut my eyes, and so I never saw the dark at all." Was he not a foolish boy? Shutting his eyes really made the matter worse.'

'But how can little children have enemies, Uncle John?' said Blue-eye Curlyhead.

'I wish they could not,' replied Uncle John, 'but I am sure they can, because they have. I will tell you some of them.

'First, there is SIN. Such a little word, but such an awful thing! Can you spell it, Nellie? S—I—N. Yes, that is quite right. A little girl can spell the word,

* Any of our young readers who have time or opportunity, may refer to *Smith's Bible Dict.*, Art. 'Coney.' *Cassell's Bible Educator*, vol. ii. p. 201.

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you see, but the greatest man that ever lived cannot tell us the dreadful evils it has done. Now, a little seed from that bad tree is found in the heart of every child. Dear baby, despite her sweet and innocent face, has a grain of that evil in her heart. And unless, as she grows older, she takes care, that little grain will grow into a great tree of wickedness. She will need to pray, and try to be good, and above all to go to the blessed Saviour, again and again, that He may kill that seed of evil, and send His Good Spirit to live in its place. Then another great enemy which children have is TEMPTATION. Our Lord told us to pray that we might be kept out of it. Tom did not think of that the other day when he was tempted. You know all about it, Tom. You went into the street. There were some bad boys waiting for you. They asked you to leave school and go off with them. Father was not looking, so you had a chance of going. And in your heart you felt you should like to go, so you went. Then there is that great enemy, SATAN. He ruined our first parents, and he does his utmost to ruin us all. He is very anxious to entrap little children, for he thinks, "If I can only get them to be naughty when they are little, they will grow up naughty." So we must keep a sharp look-out for him. He is our greatest foe.'

DISOBEDIENT FRED.

JUST in front of the house where Freddy lived ran a little brook of clear, bright water. Along its edges grew beds of thick watercress, which it was Freddy's delight to pick every morning and bring in fresh and sparkling for his mother's breakfast. The brook was an endless source of amusement to Fred. The banks on either side were low, and covered with soft, spongy turf, and when the brooklet overflowed, as it often did after heavy rains, they remained for some time swampy and unfit to walk on. When in that state, Freddy was forbidden to play there.

One fine morning our little friend was awakened early by the bright sunbeams which darted into his room. 'I will make haste and dress,' thought Fred, 'and go and gather some cress for mother's breakfast.' Then suddenly he remembered that it had been raining hard the day before, and he would be disobeying his mother if he went near the brook. But Freddy did not want to remember this. Besides, the banks looked almost dry, so privately thinking that he knew better than his mother, he

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hurried so over dressing that he never stopped to fasten his shoes. Trying hard to believe that it was for mother's sake and not his own he was doing it, Fred drew near. At first the ground yielded a little, but he would not be warned; he would soon be able to reach the finest cress in the brook. It was gathered, and squash, squash went both feet above the ankles into the black mud beneath. He tried to draw out one foot at a time, but was soon aware that he was leaving his unfastened shoe behind him. Then he tried to draw out the other, with the same result. He struggled and struggled, but only sank deeper into the mud, until only the top stripes of his stockings were to be seen. He was ashamed to call out for help, even if any one could have heard, so there he stuck, a miserable little knickerbockered figure.

Two big tears now found their way into his eyes, and rolling down his cheeks, fell heavily on the ground. But Freddy, winking very hard to prevent any more from falling, strove manfully to reach firm ground. After some floundering he did so, with the loss of both shoes, and with his sailor suit bespattered with mud to the edge of its square-cut collar.

Hearing a knock at her bed-room door at an unusually early hour, Freddy's mother opened it, and beheld a most woeful object.

'Why, Freddy,' said she, in astonishment, 'what does this mean?'

In a very choky voice Freddy confessed his disobedience and his sorrow for it. He wound up with, 'Please to forgive me, mother; I thought you wouldn't mind if I brought you some nice fresh watercress.'

'I mind my little son disobeying me very much,' said his mother, gravely, as she stroked his tangled curls. 'I would rather have your obedience than the finest watercress that ever grew. Remember the Bible says, "To obey is better than sacrifice." But, Fred, you have grieved some One beside me. Who is it?'

'God,' answered the little boy, hanging his head.

'Yes, my child, and you must ask His forgiveness as well as mine. Now, go and get your clothes changed, and another time remember mother knows best.' AID.

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER III.—THE YOUNG GARDENERS.

AT the end of the garden nearest the side of the house, was a large pond of clear, cold water. It was chalybeate water, and long strings of iron film used to gather on the surface; but when they were disturbed, the water was always found cool in the hottest day, and it never froze on the coldest. Nearly around this pond was a garden, only leaving a few feet of grass, from which you could easily get at the water. This strip was divided into five parts, known as the children's gardens, and here the young gardeners were allowed to do whatever they liked.

'Miss Mary,' said Park, the gardener, one morning, 'would you like a few celery plants for your play-garden? I find I've got more than I want?'

'Thank you, Park, I should like them very much.' And Mary held out her hands for the bunch.

'There's thirty there; that's ten apiece for you little ladies, and I'll give the boys something else. You'd best all watch me while I show you how to put them in.'

He planted one or two, then marked a square, saying, 'Keep them within that, and I'll lend you a hand-light to cover them; only you must take great care of it.'

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In a few minutes he brought them three pyramidal wooden frames, with little panes of glass, finished off with a handle at the top.

'There, Miss Mary, you see this is a little hand greenhouse, as one may say. You press it into the earth a little, and it keeps all the cold out, and the glass catches the sun for the plants.'

'How quiet Dick is,' remarked Mary, as she surveyed her new treasures with satisfaction. 'What mischief are you plotting now?'

'Mischief, indeed!' cried Dick. 'Why, I had a grand idea!'

'Out with it, then,' answered Alfred.

'You see there are three hand-lights; so if we make one a fixture, you and I can still have a turn with the others. I propose we excavate under the plants, put in that round mustard-tin, and light a fire in it. Then that will make a hot-house at once.'

'Do make it for me, Alfie dear,' pleaded Louie, and the work of excavation soon began.

But their engineering took some time; and when all was ready, and just as they were about to light the match, the first dinner-bell rang.

'Never mind; blaze up, and we'll run straight in at the second.'

'O, Dick! we can't,' answered Mary; 'we are as black as tinkers; we must get tidy, or we shall all be sent away from table.'

As soon as dinner was over, there was a general resort to the garden. Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, Mr. Henry Clifton (who was the classical tutor), and Miss Lucy Hatterleigh, felt inclined for an open-air dessert, and made straight for the raspberries. The children turned off to the crescent gardens, but were soon recalled by their papa.

'Who has been scattering coal on the broad walk?'

All eyes turned upon unlucky Dick, who confessed with great promptness.

'What were you going to do with it?' was the next question, in rather a severe tone.

'To heat my greenhouse, pa; do come and look at it, it's such a love!' and Louie's little hand crept coaxingly into her papa's.

Mr. Clifton tried hard not to smile at the grotesque arrangement as he said, 'It's very ingenious, but it won't answer, and I can't let you try. You know it's a rule not to play with fire.'

'Don't you think we are old enough to be trusted with fire now, papa?'

'You are, Alfred, and I am not afraid of you boys with your tight woollen clothes; but the girls would crouch round, and the wind would flutter their cotton pinafores, and one of them might be burned to death.'

'Then let us boys have it, papa, and tell the girls they must keep off,' urged Dick.

'That's selfish and unmanly, my boy. Dick forgot himself when he suggested that,' was the calm answer. 'Bear with the girls' weakness, and you will receive as much from their society as you give; indeed, you would do more harm than good with your apparatus. The roots of the plants would soon strike through that thin soil and touch the tin. You had better put all this straight again, bear your disappointment bravely, and I will come out after tea, and give you two pleasant pieces of news. I cannot stop now.'

'He hasn't stopped to get a bit of fruit!' exclaimed Alfred.

'I'll pick him some!' cried repentant Dick; and with one accord they ran to the upper garden.

In a few minutes Dick tapped at the study door with a plate of nicely-picked fruit, saying, 'We are so sorry we hindered you, papa; please eat these.' I think they sweetened the letters.

Meanwhile, Fleda took up her hand-light to see how her celery was growing. It looked rather flabby and flagging; so, without considering that it was the effect of transplanting, she deluged it with water, and replaced the glass.

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As soon as school was over, she returned with tender care to her celery. The glass was covered with steam, so that she could see nothing through it. Hastily lifting it off, she was dismayed at the yellow, soft, sickly-looking things, and called Park to look at them.

He saw it all at a glance, and with a roar of laughter, which Fleda felt very insulting, he shouted, 'Why, you've boiled them, miss! To pour a lot of water like that on them when the sun's fit to burn any thing up, is just the way to cook them.'

'There, don't fret about it,' he added, seeing she was just ready to cry. 'I'll clear all this rubbish away, and put some more out, now it's cool.'

Fleda went into the house feeling very sober. But she kept her own counsel, and Park was kind enough to do the same.

The Young Berean's Corner.

Answers to Bible Questions in January.

We are very much pleased with the painstaking industry of those who have sent answers to our Bible Questions. Many excellent papers have been received.

The First Prize was gained by GEORGE MYERS, of Welton, Yorkshire, aged 13. The Second by EDITH M. GLIDDON, of Guernsey, aged 11.

Some difficulty has been felt in determining to whom to award the second prize, several papers being of nearly equal merit. It has been assigned to one of the youngest competitors, who, though she has not found quite so many examples as one or two of the others, has displayed greater intelligence in arrangement and expression, and has given Scripture references. A few have mistaken the questions, and instead of giving illustrative examples, have sent lists of similar precepts. We trust, however, that all our young Bereans, whether successful in obtaining a prize or not, will reap a far richer reward from their Scripture searching. The following sent very good answers, the first four coming very near the prize:—

Thomas L. Ford, Jane Berry, Jane T. Badcock, F. E. F. Bradshaw, Llewellyn N. Tyack, Maude Cox, T. P. Bradshaw, Eva B. Sharp, W. Bumby, Arthur Coultas, Mary L. Fraser, and Mary Champness.*

The First Prize Paper is given below. It is inserted as nearly as possible in the competitor's own words; though, for want of space, many good examples are omitted—he had found one hundred.

Instances of the fulfilment of God's words, 'Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed' (1 Sam. ii. 30).

1. Those that honoured God:—Enoch walked with God, and He blessed him by taking him to heaven without dying (Gen. v. 24); Samuel was appointed in Eli's place, for God was pleased with him (1 Sam. vii. 6); God took Elijah to heaven without dying, for he pleased Him greatly (2 Kings ii. 11); John the Apostle was blessed by God by seeing into heaven before he died (Rev. iv. 1, 2); God gave David strength to slay Goliath, for he trusted in Him (1 Sam. xvii. 49); God was greatly pleased with Solomon, for He spoke to him for good, and answered his prayer (2 Chron. vii. 12); God saved Noah and his family alive in the ark when the flood came, for he obeyed God (Genesis vii. 7); Joseph trusted in God, and He prospered him (Gen. xli. 39, 40); Christ healed a centurion's servant, for He said He had not found so great faith in the Jews (Luke vii. 10); Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not burnt in the fire, because they trusted in God (Daniel iii. 26); Nehemiah's prayer was answered for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, because he served God faithfully (Neh. ii. 6, 7, 8); God gave Asa the victory over the Ethiopians, because he trusted in Him (2 Chron. xiv. 12); The men of Nineveh were saved, for they repented (Jonah iii. 10); Hezekiah honoured God with all his heart, and He blessed him (2 Chron. xxxi. 21), etc.

2. Those that despised God:—God turned Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden, for they disobeyed Him (Gen. iii.); God cursed Cain, because he slew his brother (Gen. iv. 11); God destroyed the world, because of its wickedness (Gen. vi. 7); Lot's wife, for disobeying the angel of God, was turned into a pillar of salt (Gen. xix. 26); God visited Pharaoh with plagues, because he would not own Him Lord of all, and let the children of Israel go (Exod. v. 2); The Egyptians were drowned, because they fought against God (Exod. xiv. 28); Nadab and Abihu were burnt before God, for disobeying God's command (Levit. x. 1, 2); Achan was stoned for disobeying God (Joshua vii. 25); God was angry with Eli, because he reproved not his sons (1 Sam. iii. 13); God was angry with Saul, for departing from Him, and he died a miserable death (1 Sam. xxxi. 4); Goliath defied the armies of God, and was slain by David (1 Sam. xvii. 49); A prophet was slain by a lion for disobeying God (1 Kings xiii. 24); Gehazi told Elisha a lie, and was smitten with leprosy (2 Kings v. 27); Proud Jezebel was eaten by dogs for her wickedness (2 Kings ix. 36); Jehoram, after a wicked reign, died of an awful disease; Uzziah was proud, and burnt incense in the Temple, and he became leprous; Amon worshipped idols, and was slain by his servants in his own house; Jehoiachin and Zedekiah were taken to Babylon for their sins (2 Chron.); Hananiah died, for he told a lie in God's name (Jer. xxviii. 15—17); Belshazzar was slain, for he worshipped idols (Daniel v. 30); Judas was accused by his conscience for the sin he had committed, and he hung himself (Matt. xxvii. 5); Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for telling a lie (Acts v. 5—10); Herod was smitten by an angel for being proud (Acts xii. 23), etc.

3. Those who observed the precept, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good (Rom. xii. 21:—Job overcame his wife with good, and still held his integrity (Job ii. 9, 10); The decree of the king did not frighten Daniel from praying to God, though he was put into a den of lions, yet he trusted in God, and He saved him alive (Dan. vi. 22).

* We regret that one of the very best papers arrived several days too late for classification, and did not state the age of competitor.

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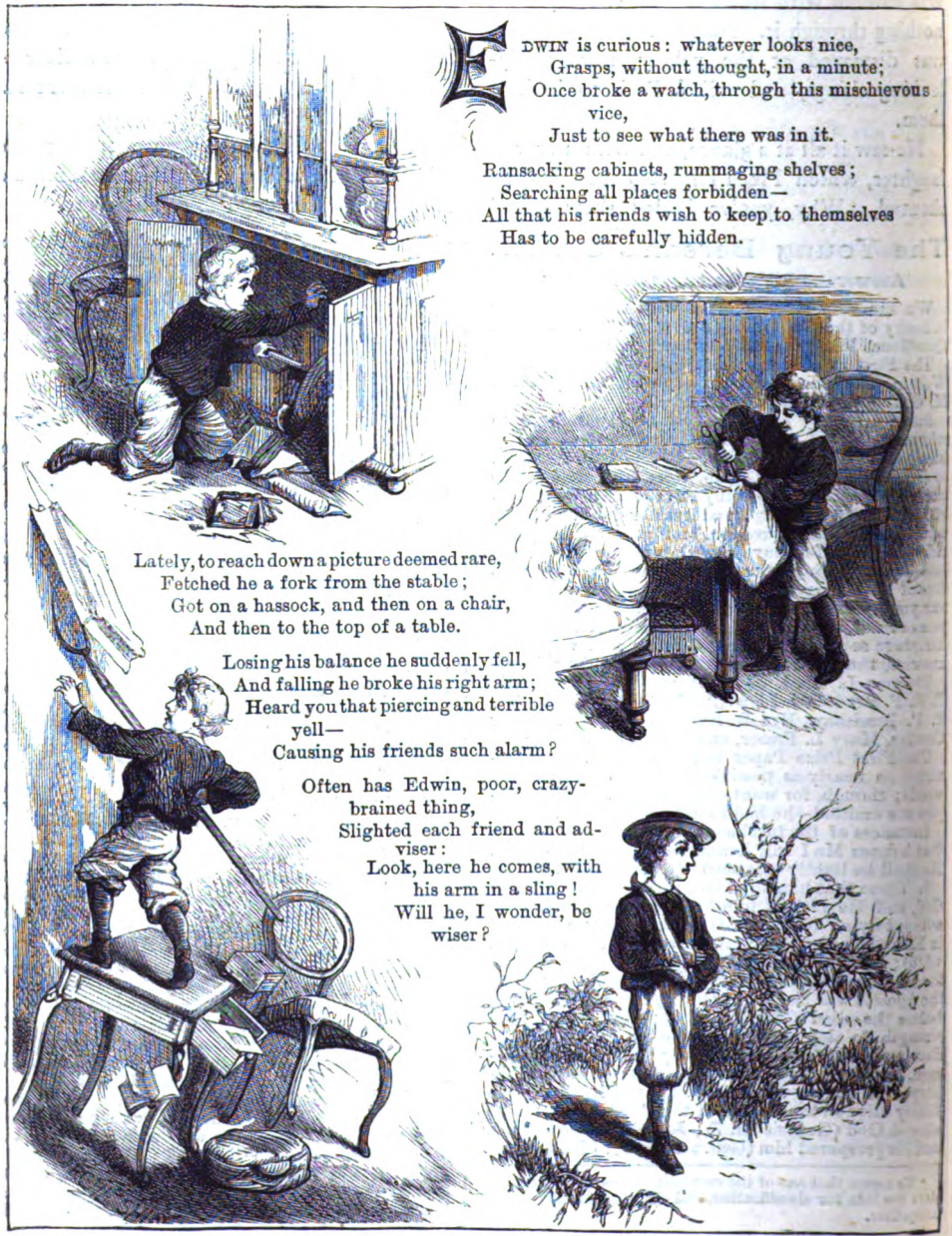
A SHARP LESSON.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL WRAY.



EDWIN is curious: whatever looks nice,
Grasps, without thought, in a minute;
Once broke a watch, through this mischievous vice,
Just to see what there was in it.

Ransacking cabinets, rummaging shelves;
Searching all places forbidden—
All that his friends wish to keep to themselves
Has to be carefully hidden.

Lately, to reach down a picture deemed rare,
Fetched he a fork from the stable;
Got on a hassock, and then on a chair,
And then to the top of a table.

Losing his balance he suddenly fell,
And falling he broke his right arm;
Heard you that piercing and terrible yell—
Causing his friends such alarm?

Often has Edwin, poor, crazy-brained thing,
Slighted each friend and adviser:
Look, here he comes, with his arm in a sling!
Will he, I wonder, be wiser?

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APRIL, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

'Doctor Bunnie.'

See page 60.

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HALF-HOURS IN THE NURSERY.

BY THE REV. J. COLWELL.

II.—DOCTOR BUNNIE AGAIN.

UNCLE JOHN would have told the children more about Doctor Bunnie last time, but Nellie began to be sleepy. So he left it until his next visit. When he came to see them again, they were all anxious to hear what he had to say; even little Fatchin joined the chorus and cried out, 'Now zen, Uncle Zon, tell us 'bout Doctor Bunnie.'

But Uncle John was in no hurry. 'We must begin properly,' he said.

'Must 'gin poply,' said Fatchin.

First Uncle John stirred the fire, then put a little more coal on. After that he lit the gas and drew down the nursery blind, and made the children sit in a circle round the stove. Then Doctor Bunnie was brought out and put in baby's high chair, from which exalted position he looked at everybody, now and then shaking his head like a very wise old rabbit.

When they were all ready Uncle John went on:

'II. *The second lesson that Doctor Bunnie teaches us is that* LITTLE PEOPLE ARE NOT ABLE TO FIGHT THEIR ENEMIES.—They cannot defend themselves as big people can. They do not know how to do it; and they are not able to do it, even if they knew how. Now Doctor Bunnie, although he looks so wise, is really very ignorant. If he lived out in the fields and saw a trap he would not know what it was, and would be almost sure to run into it. You see he is not like the fox. Reynard looks twice before he leaps once. I suppose it is because he is such a deceptive fellow himself, that he refuses to trust anybody else. However that may be, it is hard work to deceive him. But poor Bunnie knows nothing and suspects nothing, so he is easily caught. In that respect he is just like little children, is he not?'

'Yes, and like some big ones too,' said Mother, who had just crept in.

'You must please not speak again,' said Uncle John.

And then he went on to say, 'But as little children do not know their dangers or their enemies, they must be guided by those good parents and friends who do know, but especially by that loving Saviour Who is so anxious to teach and to save them. And even when Bunnie does know he is in danger, he hardly knows how to get out of it, just as when he meets a foe he is not able to fight him. He is not like the lion or the tiger, or indeed any of the beasts that are able to defend themselves. If you look at his foot you will see that it is not strong. The lion could kill a powerful dog by one stroke of his paw; Bunnie could hardly kill a mouse with his. The tiger has dreadful teeth; he could break a man's arm at one snap. But when you look at Bunnie's teeth, you will see that he has but four altogether—two above and two below. And these are not made for biting and tearing flesh, but for nibbling those vegetable substances which form his food. And although he has so much fur he cannot defend himself against the cold. He leaves his underground parlour and comes into the sunshine as often as he can; he does not get on well in places that are cold and wet, but is most at home in a warm country like Spain, and cannot live at all (unless kept in a warm house) in a cold country like Sweden. So you see how very true the words of the wise man were when he said that the conies were "a feeble folk."

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'But are they any more feeble than little children? Can little children defend themselves against their enemies any better than the conies car? I do not think so. I have known ever so many who have tried, and I never yet knew one who succeeded. They have all been beaten. Some, by bad temper; others, by temptation of various kinds; while others, again, have fallen into sad sins. A young man came to my house a little while ago. He was very tired, very hungry, and very sad. He told me a most unhappy story. His father was a good man. His mother loved the Saviour too, but she had gone to heaven years before. And after she died he left his home. First he got among bad companions, then he began to go with them to evil places, until he became quite wicked. So when the young man came to me he had neither character, nor clothes, nor food. I said to him, "How has all this come about?"

'"O!" he replied, "I did not think there was so much harm in these things, and when I found what harm there was in them, it was too late, I could not help myself."

'I know how he might have got out of his troubles, or been saved from ever getting into them,' said Tom. 'He should have prayed.'

'He should have remembered his dead mother,' said Nellie.

'And minded what his father taught him,' said Bessie.

'I do not know that even all that would have saved him,' replied Uncle John.

'He should have felt his own weakness, and have gone to Jesus to hep him,' called out Mother from behind the door.

'I asked Mother not to speak again,' said Uncle John; 'but as she has given the right answer we will not scold her. Yes, had he been afraid and known his feebleness, as the conies did, then, like them, he would have run into the Rock for safety. That is what the wise man means to teach us. Even "feeble folk"—little people that have many enemies and no power to fight them—may be safe if they will use the means provided for them. That is one great reason why the rabbits live and prosper. So it is with human beings, especially little children. Their very feebleness and timidity—if they only know how to use them—may be the means of their safety and salvation. The Apostle Paul said, "*When I am weak, then am I strong.*" So, too, we read of men, in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of many of whom it is said, that "*out of weakness*" they "*were made strong.*" In short, the wise man tells us that Doctor Bunnie and his cousins can teach us that very important lesson, namely, THE STRENGTH OF WEAKNESS. But as you will learn this lesson much better from Doctor Bunnie's cousins, you shall come down to my house in Gloucestershire next summer. Then you will be able to see how the rabbits become strong by making their houses in the rocks, and learn how little children may be made strong by making their home in the Rock Christ Jesus.'

'Hoorah for the country and Doctor Bunnie's cousins!' cried Tom.

The Bag of Farthings.

A SHORT time ago, a Minister was preaching the Sunday-school Anniversary Sermons in a village in Kent. After the collection had been made, a small satin bag was found among the contributions, containing fifty-two farthings, and a little note in a child's hand-writing, as follows:

'DEAR TEACHERS,—Please to accept my farthing a week. Trusting my fellow-scholars will do the same, and then we shall have a good collection next year, I remain, ———.'

What a beautiful instance of the way in which a child may help in supporting the cause of Jesus! This is surely one of the offerings which the Master will accept and bless.

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THE FLOWING RIVER.

BY THE LATE MR. BENJAMIN GOUGH.

O, lovely river!
Flowing on, flowing on,
Beautiful for ever—
Always going, never gone.
Widening, deepening, length'ning,
Every step is gain,
To a torrent strength'ning,
Ere it reach the plain.
Curving still and winding
On thy placid way,
And in eddies finding
Leisure for delay.
With the lilies toying,
Rippling slow—rippling slow—
Surely 'tis enjoying
Every wavelet's flow.
Through the reeds and rushes
Where the moor-hens hide,
While the woodland thrushes
Warble at thy side,
O, lovely river!
Bright in summer peace,
Still, in rapturous quiver,
Flow and never cease.
Through the vale terrestrial
Breathing love and life,
Kindling thoughts celestial,
Soothing earthly strife.

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER IV.—REUBEN THE MASON.

As soon as Mr. Clifton came into the garden after tea, the children gathered round him to hear what he had promised to tell them. He led the way to the arbour, and when all were quietly seated he began:

'I dare say you children do not remember the time when I had this garden laid out, and you were too young then to understand all my plans. From the first I meant to have a hot-house, but it was not convenient to have it built then, so I only had a place prepared for it. Now, however, I have a great many choice plants that the frost would kill, if they were left out of doors all the winter, and so I have given orders for a mason to come to-morrow and begin to build.'

'May we help him, Papa?' asked Dick.

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'If he likes to let you, but you must not bother and hinder him.'

'Will there be room for us to put a thing in, now and then, if it wants nursing?' enquired Alfred, who took a great deal of pains with his flowers.

'To be sure; there shall be a corner for you. I mean to have a very pretty place, with a grape-vine and a passion-flower trained up the walls; and a large cage at one end, long enough for birds to fly about in, and I have ordered a pair of canaries for it. Then you know, or at least Alfred does, that there should be a tank of water standing in a hot-house. For one thing, it prevents the air becoming injuriously dry with the heat, and besides, it takes the chill off the water. You might give hot-house plants cold by using water brought straight from the pond. So as we must have water, we may as well make it ornamental and have a little fountain.'

'What sort of a man is he, that is coming to build?' asked Dick. 'I hope he is not cross, Papa.'

'I dare say more than one will come, but the one I have spoken to is called Reuben Sykes; he is very poor, for he was out of work a long time last winter, and he has a wife and family to support. One of his children is a poor little cripple, who would stare in astonishment at the thought of any one being discontented in a place like this.'

Fleda hung her head, and her Papa went on without looking at her. 'She has so few comforts and amusements, poor little thing; but Reuben is very kind to her, and often, after he has had a hard day's work, carries her about in his arms till she falls asleep. Last winter there were so many men out of work and so much distress, that Sir Lionel decided on a noble plan for helping them: he gave two large fields to the town for a park, and laid it out entirely at his own expense, giving employment to numbers of labourers. Then the park wanted dividing into grass-plots, flower-beds and asphalte walks. Some of the work could not be finished till the fine weather set in, or the park would have been opened before this time. I expect we shall have a public holiday some day next week, and have a grand ceremony at the opening of the park.'

'If it's fine may we go, Papa?' asked Mary, quickly.

'I shall have no objection if your Mamma has none.'

The coming treat at Guise was eagerly

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discussed that night, but next day it was almost forgotten in the fun and excitement of watching Sykes and his mate begin to build. As Sykes was a kind-hearted man and fond of children, he let them help him, one at a time. When Fleda's turn came, she first listened to his directions and then began chatting gaily:

'Papa says you helped to build Guise Park. What kind of a place is it, Mr. Sykes?'

'It's a famous place for children to play in; there are large grass-plots, and a platform for the band.'

'O, will there be a band? That will be nice.'

'Yes, Miss, there will be a band at the opening, for sure; and they say that a band will play every Thursday night through the summer.'

That subject being exhausted there was a short silence, then Fleda tried another:

'What's the name of your man, Mr. Sykes.'

'Frank!'

'All right,' said that worthy, who was mixing mortar vigorously.

'I didn't call you.'

'Well, I never! I heard you say "Frank" as plain as possible.'

'Little missy only asked what your name was.'

Frank returned to his 'pudding;' but Fleda felt it would not do to talk any more about a man with such very quick ears, so there was another pause, and she began to wonder whether she had built enough for one day.

'How's your little girl?' was her next question.

'Very bad, Miss; she can't sleep o' nights. I think she wants more fresh air, but I don't know how she's to get it.'

'Can't she go and sit in Guise Park when it's open.'

'I must try and get her there sometimes; but you see it's quite evening before I get home, and she can't walk a step herself, if it was ever so near.'

'Poor thing! How long has she been ill?'

'Ever since she was born. She never did walk and she never will, for she's got no backbone you know.'

'No backbone?' cried Fleda, naturally shocked at this astounding anatomical statement. 'How dreadful!'

'So there's no chance of her being much better,' added the dejected father.

'I should think not, indeed,' agreed Fleda. 'Can she read?'

'No, Miss, not at present.'

'That's a pity. I would have lent her some of my story-books to amuse herself with.'

'That's very kind of you all the same.'

'I think I'd better go now, my hand aches with this heavy trowel,' said Fleda, laying it down, and testing the position of her last brick with the plumb-line.

'Yes, it's too big for your little hand. I'll bring a nice little one I have at home, if you think you will come and help me to build again.'

'I am sure I will, especially if you will lend me a lighter trowel. That will be nice.'

'I can give it you; it's meant for a child, and you can dig your garden with it afterwards.'

'Thank you, Mr. Sykes,' said Fleda, shyly, suddenly feeling that she had a great many toys, and did not need another. 'But it seems too bad to take it. Can't one of your children dig with it?'

'They have no garden to dig, and not much time to play,' was the quiet, sorrowful answer.

Fleda felt that she should hardly like Sykes to see her having a good game just then, so she went indoors and read till school-time.

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THE LITTLE PRISONERS.

WHAT a pretty, peaceful picture these two little birds make! They look so happy and contented, enjoying each other's society. But though they are contented, I must tell you they are not really quite so happy as they would have been if allowed to fly about at liberty in their native woods. For though doves are often kept in confinement, they can never be properly called domesticated; for, unlike their cousins, the carrier pigeons, they show no attachment to place. If set free, they would never wish to come back to their nice substantial wooden house, but would much prefer their own flimsy little nest of small loose twigs. 'Very bad taste,' you think; but then it's their nature, and the woods are their own home; and you know wiser creatures than doves think '*There is no place like home!*'

OUR LITTLE BONNIE BELLE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LITTLE RAY,' ETC.

THAT is what we called our baby, but her real name was Mabel. She was everybody's pet, and had the sweetest and most fascinating little ways in the world. How proud we all were of her! even Evans, the cross old gardener. Our house was a little way out of the town, and stood back in a large old-fashioned garden. We children had each our plot of ground, and cultivated just what we liked. Mine was generally full of mignonnette and musk. Eda's was lovely with all sorts of sweet flowers. Tom's contained a mass of violet roots one year; it would be a cowslip bed the next, and full of carrots and turnips the third year; and so on. Walter grew roses, nothing else. He said he cared for no other flowers; but his roses were worth growing—they were beauties. As for Donald, he grew a little bit of everything; and Winnie grew weeds.

I wonder if you can guess a little of our characters from this description of our gardens.

When we were at play, little Mabel used to toddle about after us, getting in everybody's way. We used to wish she were old enough to join us, and yet we did not want her to grow up.

It was not often that any shows or sights came to our town, so that it created quite a sensation when the news arrived that Wombwell's Menagerie was coming. Our boys were almost wild; Winnie and I were as bad; Eda was the only one who took it quietly. She learnt her lessons as if nothing were going to happen; we could not. At last Mamma told us that only those who were good and steady during school-time should go. That sobered us a bit. Little Mabel was three years old then, and was very anxious to see the 'pretty little baby-lions' that were advertised. I believe she thought they were like her 'baby-kitten,' as she called it.

At last the day arrived, and we all had a holiday. The caravans came straggling in, and we stood at the gate to see them pass—we girls, I mean—the boys went to meet the elephants. Winnie and I wanted to go too, but Mamma would not let us; she came down to the gate and gave us strict orders.

'Can I trust you not to leave the garden,

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The Little Prisoners.

See page 55.

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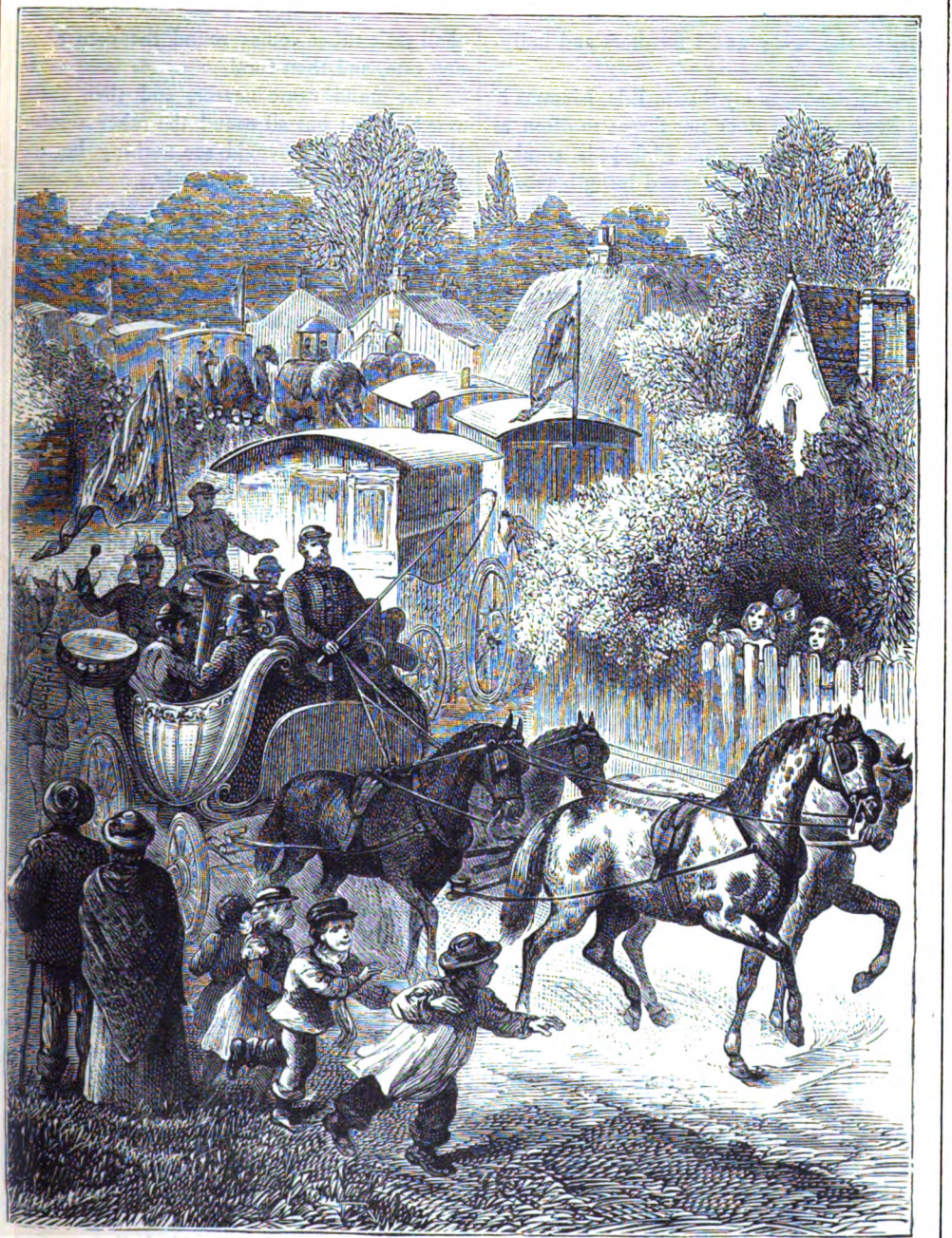

The Arrival of the Menagerie. See page 55.

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Kitty?' she said; and I felt hurt and indignant.

'Why don't you say that to Eda, Mamma?'

'Because Eda does not forget so often as Kitty and Winnie do. Mabel is coming down, but if she is frightened bring her back to me.'

'Mamma,' cried Winnie, 'don't you wish I were a boy? I do; the boys go everywhere!'

'I do not wish my little girls to grow up rough and rude,' said Mamma; 'boys can go where their sisters cannot.'

Winnie shrugged her shoulders; it was an old grievance with us—not being allowed to do everything the boys did.

A few minutes after, Mabel came down. She was delighted with the yellow caravans, and wanted them all to stop.

Donald, who had promised Winnie to report proceedings, came up from the town.

'Have you heard the lions roar?' said Winnie, her big eyes wide open.

Donald looked doubtful. 'I heard a noise once—a very queer noise, but I am not sure it was a lion.'

'I dare say it was. O, Donald, just run and climb on the summer-house and see if the elephants are coming!'

Eda, tired of waiting, walked after Donald.

Presently we heard a loud noise, as if people were angry or excited. Something was coming down the road, and we waited with breathless suspense to see what it was.

Suddenly Winnie screamed, 'O, Kitty! suppose one of the lions has escaped!'

This exciting solution of the mystery took away my breath.

'Shut the gate!' I gasped. 'Fasten it tight, Winnie! Can lions jump?'

Winnie did not know, and we stood looking at each other in dismay.

'If we run in,' I faltered, 'and it turns out to be only the elephants! O, Winnie!'

'I shan't go in!' she said, sturdily. 'I shall wait till it comes round the corner, at any rate, and then run.'

The sound came nearer, and then there was a crash: but all round the other side of the corner! We could see nothing, but we could hear the shouts distinctly:

'Take care, there! Out of the way! Catch hold of his head!' and other suggestive directions. Something dreadful had certainly happened.

'This is more than I can bear!' I said at last, growing desperate as the noise increased. 'I am sure Mamma would let us go just to the corner. We need not mix with the crowd. Shall we, Winnie?'

For one short minute we hesitated, and then a sound which we had never heard before scattered every sense of duty, and off we ran, forgetting that Mabel had left Eda and come back to us. She was not close to us, but was gathering daisies a little way from the gate.

We found that one of the wheels had come off a caravan, and the animals inside were protesting against such an unusual occurrence by making the strange sounds we had heard. The horse had turned restive, too, and they had hard work to keep it still: the crowd had to rush back out of the way of its hoofs every few minutes. We stood on a bank and watched it all, not daring to go near. Suddenly Winnie turned to me with a frightened face, 'Kitty, where was Mabel?' I shall never forget the throb my heart gave at the question. We ran back as fast as we could, but Mabel was not at the gate.

'Perhaps she has gone to Eda,' I said, and we rushed off to the summer-house. There were Eda and Donald, sitting on the top—alone!

'O, come up!' shouted Donald. 'I pulled Eda up. It's easy enough. You can see the accident from here.'

'Where's Mabel?' I said, feeling my face

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turn white. Eda turned round. 'Isn't she with you,' she said, in a startled voice. We were obliged to tell what we had done, and Donald flew off to the house. But she was not there. We hunted all over the house and garden, while the servants and the boys went out into the road, and to the town. Walter found her at last, quietly playing with some dirty little children in a cottage close by. He brought her home in triumph, and we almost cried with joy over our recovered treasure. I could not understand why Mamma looked so white and anxious as she held our darling in her arms. Mabel was safe, what was there to trouble about?

Winnie and I did not go to see the menagerie. Papa would not take us. It was a dreadful punishment, and we cried nearly all the evening. Mamma took little notice of us. She sat nursing Mabel and telling her tales till her bed-time, and even then would not give her up to nurse. Once when I woke up in the night, I heard her steal out of her room to the nursery to look at the little one.

But I understood it all the next day when Mabel grew hot and feverish, and nurse told us that the children in the cottage were just recovering from scarlet fever. How miserable I felt as I knelt by Mamma's side watching the beautiful little flushed face of my darling. I thought if she died I should never know a happy moment again. When the doctor came we were all sent away to aunt Mercy's farm. Every morning and evening the boys went down to our own garden gate and heard the latest report and brought it back to the farm. I used to sit on the stile in the meadow and watch for them, and as soon as they came in sight they signalled the news. They were all sorry for me and never said one unkind word, for they saw how unhappy I was. Walter was so kind and good: it was he who invented the signals so that I should know the news before they came up. It was he, too, who brought the glad tidings that Mabel was out of danger. What a happy day that was! I went off by myself to the barn and cried for joy. We actually had a game that day for the first time since we came to the farm. It was a long time before we went home, and we found our little rosy Mabel sadly altered, so thin and pale, but she was as sweet as ever. How we did love and pet her! Winnie and I had learnt a hard lesson, but I am sure it made us more thoughtful and obedient.

The Beautiful Garden.

AN ALLEGORY.—BY A. E. BLEBY.

A GREAT king once called his people together and showed them a waste and stony plain, and said to them, 'See, whoever will do most at clearing this place will have the greatest reward; but the peculiarity of this ground is, that whilst you can all find work, those who do only what they like, will do less than the weakest who try to do what is right.' At these words many set to work, full of hope; but after a time several, even of the strongest, began to leave the disagreeable work to others, and so often the trees they cut down sprang up again, or the stones they would not stoop to remove tripped them up as they walked.

There was a little boy watching them who said to his sister, 'What can we do? yet the king said every one can find work.' Whilst he looked he saw that the brambles wanted moving as well as the great trees, so he began cheerily; and his little sister saw that the patient workmen were faint and thirsty with the heat, and she carried them water from the spring. The brambles pricked and hurt the boy's hands, the hot sun beat on the girl's head as she went to and fro, but the boy said to her, 'This is work that must be done;' and she answered, 'It will please the king.'

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When the day's work was over, the king's smile turned the plain into a beautiful garden, where the best and fairest portions were for those who had denied themselves. And to the two children was given a plot as sweet and good as any that the wisest and most industrious workmen enjoyed. But they thought the king's smile the richest reward of all.

Open unto Me!

BY AUNT MAY.

WHEN the heart is quiet
In the hour of prayer,
What is this that cometh
Noiseless as the air?
What dear voice is saying,
Low and tenderly,
Praying, ever praying,
'Open unto Me?'

Children, have you ever
Heard that voice before?
'Tis the voice of Jesus,
Standing at the door,
It is Jesus saying,
Low and tenderly,
It is Jesus praying,
'Open unto Me!'

Listen, children, listen!
Jesus Christ, the King,
Into every dark heart
Light and life will bring.
Open wide to Jesus—
Open wide the door!
And the Lord will enter
To go out no more.

He will stand beside you
When some morn you wait,
Full of hope and longing,
At the pearly gate;
He will bid you enter,
Saying tenderly,
'These are they who gladly
Opened unto Me.'

ATTENTIVE CARLO.

CARLO was Charley's greatest pet, and was very fond of his little master, and watched that no harm came to the child while the two played together. Once Charley had a book given him which was full of pictures of animals. He wanted to tell his dog all about the wonderful creatures, so he leaned the book against Carlo, and tried to make him understand. Carlo stood very still, and took care not to shake the book. He knew that his little master was talking kindly to him, but he could learn nothing about the pictures, for dogs have not minds like children's. Be thankful, dear children, that you can learn, and do not grumble when your lessons are a little hard to understand.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

II.—AN EASTER PICTURE.

IT was Easter Sunday evening when the Scrap-book was next produced, and, of course, our little friends looked for something referring to the events of the first Easter-day.

'You will see at once,' Aunt Kate began, 'that our Picture represents Peter running to the sepulchre, and John looking in to see where the Lord had been buried, just after Mary Magdalene had come to tell them that she had found it empty when she went there early in the morning.'

'Who, did she think, had taken Jesus away?' asked Willie. 'I suppose she thought that some of His enemies the Jews, or perhaps the Roman soldiers, had removed His body during the Sabbath-day?'

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Attentive Carlo.

See page 60.

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'Did she want Peter and John to go and look for Him?' asked Pollie.

'Yes, I dare say she did; at any rate, she thought they ought to know about it. Katie had better read the story; it is in St. John's Gospel, chapter xx.; begin at the third verse.'

Kate read: 'Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.'

'I suppose John was more anxious than Peter to find out whether Jesus had risen or not,' she said.

'Well, most likely they both ran as fast as ever they could; and St. John, who, it seems, was the younger, probably would be likely to get there first.'

'Perhaps Peter was rather afraid of seeing Jesus after having denied Him,' was Willie's suggestion.

'I hardly think that either of them quite expected that Jesus was alive again; they did not yet understand much of what He had said to them about His resurrection.'

Katie went on reading: 'And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.' 'Why didn't John go in?' she asked.

'I think that most likely St. John's reverential feeling prevented him from hurrying in; he felt awed by the startling sight of the empty tomb, where the body of the Lord had lain.'

Katie read again: 'Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie.'

'It must have been a large grave for Peter to be able to go into it like that,' said Willie.

'Yes, it was "hewn out in the rock," and was not like our tombs, but a kind of cave cut out in the face of the rock.'

Katie continued: 'And the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.'

'Who wrapped them together?' Pollie asked.

'I should think one of the angels about whom we read in St. Luke's Gospel. Perhaps they were there when Jesus rose, and unloosed the grave-clothes that bound Him, and then wrapped them carefully together and laid them neatly in the tomb. You know the priests told the soldiers to say that the disciples had stolen away the body of Jesus while they slept; but if it had been so, they would never have stayed to fold up the napkin and the other clothes; they would have been in such a hurry to get away before the guards woke again.'

'I wonder whether the angels will be there to help us when we rise at the Judgment Day,' said Katie.

'Very likely they will, for we know that they are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation;" and in the descriptions of that day in the Revelation we read a great deal about angels.'

Katie continued reading: 'Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.'

'What did he believe?' said Willie. 'I suppose that Jesus was risen again?' he added.

'I have read some books,' said his Aunt, 'that say he only believed what Mary had told them—that the body of the Lord had been taken away. But I think he would believe that when she told him, without seeing for himself. I have no doubt he did believe that Christ had risen, though he would still wonder where He had gone.'

'Perhaps he thought Jesus had gone to heaven, and they would never see Him again,' said Katie.

'Didn't Peter believe too?' Pollie asked.

'We are not told that he did; so I sup-

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pose he did not feel sure. We read in St. Luke's Gospel that Peter went away from the sepulchre, "wondering in himself at that which was come to pass." He was surprised and astonished; but he does not seem, like St. John, to have understood that this was the fulfilment of the Lord's sayings about His rising from the dead on the third day.'

'I dare say St. John had paid more attention to what Jesus said than Peter had done,' said Katie.

'Yes, no doubt; they had both heard the same words and seen the same miracles wrought; they had both been with Him when He raised Lazarus, and Jairus's daughter, and the son of the Widow of Nain; but you see, men don't all make the same use of the lessons they learn and of the advantages which they have. Neither of them had properly understood what the Lord had said, or else, from the time of His death, they would have looked for His rising again. But there is one more verse to be read.'

'Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.'

'Why didn't they wait, like Mary Magdalene? If they had, they would have seen Jesus, as she did,' Willie said.

'They did not know that their Lord was so near; and perhaps they went back to tell the other disciples what they had seen, and to talk about what it was best to do. But now tell me what we ought to learn from the history of our Lord's resurrection.'

'Not to be afraid to die,' said Katie.

'Why?' asked Willie. 'You know Jesus was only in the grave three days, and we may be there years and years.'

'Yes, but it will only be our bodies that are there, our souls will live all the time, and at the great day of the Resurrection we shall come to take our bodies again. You know that St. Paul says that Christ is "the first-fruits of them that slept," and he means that since Christ has risen all who love Him shall rise too.'

'Besides, Auntie,' said Pollie, 'we couldn't go to heaven unless we died, could we?'

'No, dear; or our bodies were changed. It was through the grave that Jesus went to heaven, and by the same way we must go. When I was in London I went to St. Paul's Cathedral, and saw there a striking monument. There are two dark gates fast closed, and an angel stands on each side sleeping, as if waiting until the judgment-day, and over the gates there are these words: "Through the grave and gate of death we pass to our joyful resurrection." The grave looks dark and cold to us, but it is, now that Jesus has gone through it, the gate of heaven. I will just read to you some verses that Mr. Keble wrote in the *Christian Year* about what we have been reading. You will hardly understand them fully yet, still, I think, you will be able to see something of what he means. He calls Peter *Reason*, because he went into the tomb and examined it; John he calls *Faith*, because he believed; and Mary he calls *Love*, because she went so early to the sepulchre and could not leave it till she had seen the Lord.

'Reason and Faith at once set out
To search the Saviour's tomb;
Faith faster ran, but waits without
As fearing to presume,
Till Reason enter in and trace
Christ's relics round the holy place:
"Here lay His limbs, and here His sacred head,
And who was by to make His new-forsaken bed?"
'Both wonder, one believes—but while
They muse on all at home,
No thought can tender Love beguile
From Jesu's grave to roam.'

Then they knelt down and prayed: 'O Lord Jesus Christ, we thank Thee that Thou hast, by Thy death and resurrection, made the grave only the entrance to eternal life; and we pray Thee to help us so to live that when we die we may pass through the grave and gate of death to a joyful resurrection, for Thy Name's sake. Amen.'

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St. John Looking into the Sepulchre. *See page 60.*

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MAY, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

Gathering Wild Flowers.

See page 66.

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SPRING FLOWERS.

OUR artist has drawn a picture which makes us long to be out in the quiet country lanes gathering flowers, those beautiful messengers by which our Father in heaven tells us of His love. How thickly they are scattered everywhere! Would it matter very much, do you think, if here and there a few were imperfect? Perhaps you think it would not; but that would not be God's idea of creation. The tiniest petal or slenderest stamen of the buttercup is created as perfect, and finished off as exquisitely, as the strongest branch of the oak tree. Every page of Nature's beautiful picture-book, teaches more plainly than words, that 'whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well.'

Dear children, in God's written Book He asks us to be followers of Him Who thinks nothing too small to be done perfectly. Let us try to be so in the little things that make up our daily life.

This is one among the many helpful thoughts suggested by Spring Flowers. I wonder if the young lady in the Picture is helping her little brother and sister to learn other pleasant lessons from the flowers. At least, they look earnest and happy in their work; perhaps they are thinking of some poor invalid to whom they intend to take them. They know what pleasure she will feel in looking at them as she lies alone all day on her couch, longing for a breath of the summer air, and wondering—O, how sadly!—whether she will ever revisit the dear old haunts. If you live in the country, or if you are likely to visit it soon, will you try to imitate the Saviour 'Who went about doing good,' by ministering to some of His little ones in taking or sending them some of the lovely flowers which you are so pleased to gather? You will find 'it is more blessed to give than to receive;' and the reward will be all the sweeter if it is earned by a little self-denial.

If the May flowers you pluck give pleasure to others as well as to yourself, they will leave a fragrance in your heart that will remain long after the flowers are withered.

VIOLET.

A LETTER FROM CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE TO THE CHILDREN OF ENGLAND.

MY NEW YOUNG FRIENDS,—I call you 'new,' because your country and your people are alike new and strange to me; and 'young,' because I am so old. The Present, to me, is as a dream; for I live in the recollection of that Past, so long departed, when I stood in stern glory outside the splendid Temple of the Sun in the city of On, three thousand years ago! The people of Egypt, among whom I dwelt, worshipped the sun as a god, and erected temples in his honour; and as there were several temples in this city, the Greeks named it Heliopolis, or 'City of the Sun.' Now, I dare say many of you children will feel a degree of interest in me as I have been brought over to your land; and, perhaps, would not be unwilling to listen for a short time if I were to unfold a little of my history to you. I am made of red granite, which was dug out of the quarries of a place called Syene, some considerable distance from On, and sent down the river Nile on rafts; when its destination was reached, it was shaped into the form I bear, and called an obelisk.

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At the time I was made, if I remember aright, there was a king reigning over Egypt called Thothmes III., and by his order I, with three other obelisks, was erected in front of the grand temple at On, in which city he held his court. The King Thothmes III. cut many inscriptions on me, telling of his wars and victories, until I was covered with historic facts which you will be quite unable to read; but perhaps some clever people will translate them for you. I must now pass over a very long period in my history, during which there were many wars and invasions of our land, and come to the time when the Romans conquered it, and took the city in which I had dwelt for ages.

It was in the year 23 B.C., that these haughty victors carried me away, together with my sister obelisk, to adorn their great and splendid capital, Alexandria. I dare say they found it a very difficult task to move us, for I alone weigh one hundred and eighty-six tons; but they employed iron machinery, which, I remember, hurt me sadly at the time, and I only recovered when I was at last set up again in Alexandria. Here I was placed outside the palace of the Cæsars, called the Cæsarium, a very magnificent building; and while I felt proud of my position, I could not but mourn, long and bitterly, at being torn so roughly from the memories and endeared associations of a thousand years! Augustus Cæsar was Emperor at this time, and the pomp and magnificence of his court, and also that of his successors, is not to be described. I very soon learned to like my new home: there was such an endless variety of persons to look down upon. Now I saw a small knot of students, eagerly discussing with each other some abstruse point; and then a busy crowd of merchants absorbed in their commercial speculations; while now and again an indolent Roman grandee was borne past in his sedan chair by cringing slaves, who paid him every obeisance. As I looked upon them all, I thought how soon they would pass away from the earth, while I still lived on for countless ages!

There had been a queen in this city some years before I arrived, named Cleopatra, for whom the people entertained much affection; so in memory of her they named me 'Cleopatra's Needle.' Why I was called a needle I never could find out; for you know, dear children, that I am an immense block of granite sixty-five feet high, and a needle is such a little thing. But such is my name, although I can neither sew nor hem. It is now one thousand nine hundred years ago since I was taken from On to Alexandria, where I remained for a long time. I think it must have been an earthquake that threw me down into the sand and destroyed the palace also, and in the sand I lay for centuries; until I was aroused by the noise of a battle being fought close beside me, between the English and the French, peoples new and strange to me. The English gained the victory, although their brave general was killed; this was in 1801 A.D.

The British soldiers took a fancy to me, strange to relate, and each subscribed some money in order to bring me to their country; but whether no one cared for the trouble of removing me, or whether they altered their minds, or what, I do not know, but I was left undisturbed in my quiet place. The next thing I heard was that the governor of Egypt, Mehemet Ali, had offered me as a present to the English; it was now 1820, and still these tardy people never came for me, so I went to sleep in the sand again. At last, one day I was awakened by a great stir all around me, and I found that men with iron tools were trying to pull me up out of the sand, and I guessed that the English had come to fetch me. After a great deal of hard work these people succeeded in their efforts, and after encasing me in very strong iron, I felt myself lurched into the sea, and pulled along by what I supposed to be a ship in front of me, to which I was

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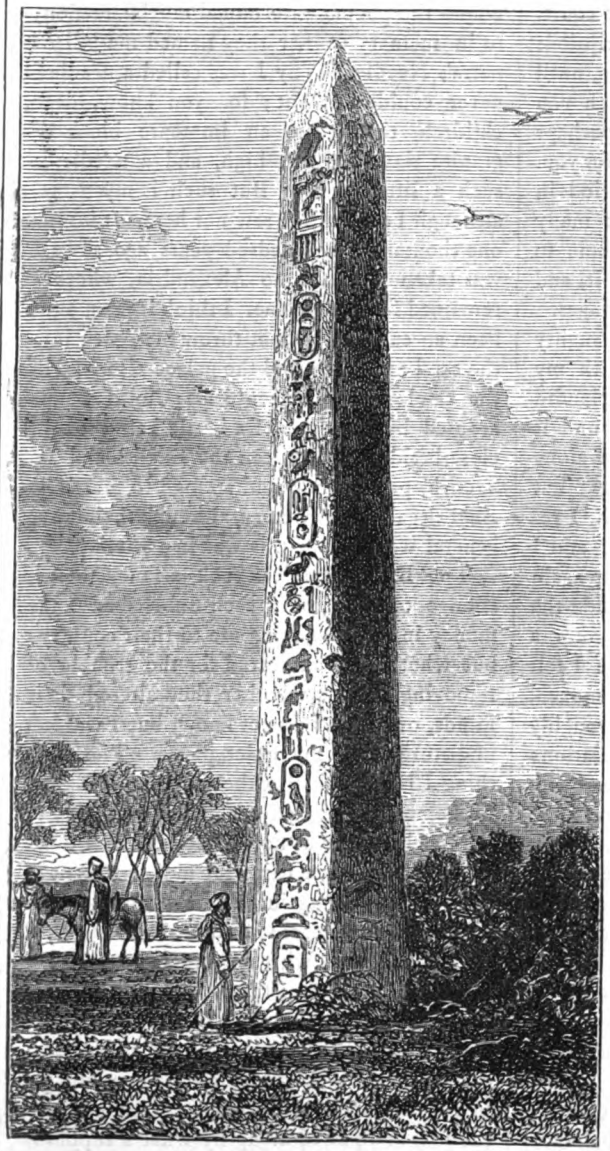
attached by a cable or rope. You may suppose I felt exceedingly uncomfortable, being tossed about by the great waves; and to complete my misery, when we arrived very near to this new country, England, the rope that joined me to the ship broke, and I was left, a poor stranger, to drift on the cheerless ocean! After a while a vessel seeing my distress took me into Ferrol, a port in Spain, for the winter; then, after a month or two, the English sent a ship to fetch me, and soon I found myself sailing up the river Thames, while many people were anxiously looking out to see me arrive. At last I was safely moored in the docks, and very glad was I to rest after such a tedious voyage.



The Obelisk at 'On' (Heliopolis).

I feel very lonely and desolate in this strange country; and I do beseech you, dear children, with warm hearts and ready sympathies, to take pity on me, and to feel as much interest in me as you can, and I shall indeed feel grateful to you, and will always remain,

Your very obliged friend,

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

H. M.

The Hot Saw.

'O, FRANK, come and see how hot my saw gets when I rub it!'

'That's the friction,' said Frank, with the wisdom of two years more than Eddie boasted.

'Yes,' said sister Mary, who was passing; 'it's the friction, and it makes me think of two little boys who were quarrelling over a trifle this morning; and the more they talked the hotter their tempers grew, until there was no knowing what might have happened if mother had not thrown cold water on the fire by sending them into separate rooms.'

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Launching of the Needle at Alexandria.

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THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER V.—THE LITTLE TROWEL.

The little trowel occupied a good deal of Fleda's thoughts that evening. She hardly liked to take it from such a poor man as Sykes, and yet she was afraid he would feel hurt if she refused it. The next morning it rained, so the children could not go into the garden before school. This was a great trial to poor Fleda, who, in her vexation, did not manage her studies so well as usual, and was still busy with a long sum when her sisters put up their books. Fleda was a pretty good hand at arithmetic, so she soon finished, and hastened after Mary and Louie. Judge her surprise and dismay when she met Mary near the garden gate with a pretty little trowel in her hand! Before Fleda had time to speak, Mary exclaimed gleefully, 'Look, Fleda, what Sykes has given me! He says I may keep it.'

'You've no right to it, it's mine!' cried the disappointed child.

Now, if Fleda had not been excited and worried to begin with, she would have explained properly, and Mary would have given it up; but, unfortunately, she was just on the verge of ill-temper, and a little thing pushed her over.

'Well, of all the mean, unsisterly tricks, that is about the worst. I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself,' was her angry answer to Mary's simple, 'No, it isn't yours, it's mine; he gave it to *me*.'

Of course, Mary was astonished and indignant. Never having heard a word about the promise, she supposed that Fleda thought it ought to be a joint-stock toy, and objected to her monopolizing it; so she answered, 'Of course, I shall let you use it, if you won't be so rude and cross.'

'Thank you for the kind permission,' said Fleda, in a tone of deep scorn. 'We shall see. Perhaps I shall kindly allow *you* to use it when it is quite convenient.'

Mary was walking away as she spoke, and had now reached the house. As she disappeared, it occurred to Fleda that perhaps she was going to ask her Mamma to decide between them, and she had better follow to make her own cause good. Mary was fleet of foot, and had reached the sitting-room before Fleda was up one flight of stairs.

'Mamma, see what a pretty little trowel Sykes has given me. May I not keep it? Fleda thinks it ought to be joint-stock, but he gave it to me.'

Mrs. Clifton was most careful to be impartial between her children, and generally spared no pains to find out the rights of a matter, but just now she was very busy. It was Saturday morning, and a letter had come inviting the three little girls to join the daughters of the other trustees at the opening of Guise Park. To please his gloomy little daughter, Sir Lionel had arranged for a cottagers' flower-show, and the Honourable Ellen was to award and give the prizes, with the help of the fourteen daughters of the trustees. It being near the end of July, their summer dresses were looking rather faded and soiled; and Mrs. Clifton was not the only mamma who was very busy that Saturday morning, lest her little girl should be disappointed of her pleasure on Tuesday. In this case there were three to supply, so it was no great wonder that Mrs. Clifton answered quickly:

'If he gave it to you, I suppose he meant you to have it. Run away, now, and tell the others they must not trouble me this morning.'

Mary met Fleda at the top of the stairs, and at once said to her, 'Mamma says, if he gave it to me, he meant me to have it; and she's very busy now, so we are not to trouble her again this morning. Aunt Lucy is unpicking your white frock, and Mamma was looking at mine. I wonder what they are going to do for us!'

Fleda was a passionate child, and it hurt her very much to find the whole case settled in a minute, and no appeal allowed, so she exclaimed vindictively, 'You have not told

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Mamma the whole truth, and it was very mean of you to give me no chance of telling it myself.'

'No, I have not told Mamma the whole truth; I have not told her how cross and rude you are about it, but I will if you don't behave yourself.'

'Children, don't stand chattering on the stairs!' said their Papa, opening his study door; 'I can hear your voices down here. Go into the garden.'

Fleda ran down hastily, lest he should ask what they were talking about. She ran to the copse and hid herself among the bushes, and thought over all that had happened. She knew she had a right to the toy, and she had not yet learned that to do a right thing in a wrong manner makes it a wrong thing. If she had told Mary at once, quietly, 'He promised it to me yesterday, I think it a mistake for him to give it to you,' Mary would have given it up at once. They might have gone together amicably, to either Mamma or Sykes, and put the case fairly; but Fleda felt it was too late for that now, she dared not provoke Mary to repeat her unsisterly words, as she knew that her Mamma would be sadly displeased.

She sat and cried for a long while, till Dick pushed the branches aside with a cheery 'Halloa, Flidkins! down in the dumps? Come out and have a game at little wickets. "Tip and go," you're very fond of that, I know.'

'I don't want to play this morning, Dick, and I wish you would not call me that silly, ugly name.'

Dick withdrew, whistling, and Fleda heard him say, as he reached the others, 'It's quite true, she's horridly cross;' at which the unhappy little girl's tears flowed faster. She could not deny the charge; but she felt that such ill-treatment was quite a sufficient excuse.

A NATURALIST'S NIGHT ADVENTURE.

I DON'T think any of my little readers would choose to spend their nights out of doors in lonely churchyards or caves, rather than in their snug, warm beds at home. And you will be surprised when I tell you that Mr. Edward, the naturalist, about whom you have heard so many stories, for fifteen years, during five months of the year, slept out of doors every night in the week, except Sunday nights! Instead of going to bed, he liked to stay out, and watch the habits of the night birds. The owl, you know, and the bat, as well as many other creatures, can only be properly observed at night.

Well, one night after Mr. Edward had been busy for some hours watching, and occasionally capturing some bird or insect, he lay down to rest in a large burrow, or hole, in the woods, and was soon fast asleep. During the day he had caught a curious little fieldmouse, which he was anxious not to lose, so he tied a string to its tail, and fastened the other end to one of his buttons, thus allowing the animal some liberty, and yet, as he thought, securing his prize. But his sound sleep was disturbed by something pulling violently at his waistcoat, and he heard terrible screeches and yells close to his head.

At first, as you may suppose, he was considerably confused and frightened by this strange noise in the night; but when he had recovered himself a little, he began to feel for his mouse. But, alas! not a vestige of him could be found, except the skin of his tail!

Not far off, a great owl was perched; and Mr. Edward was no longer at a loss to discover where the screams came from. The owl had tried to capture the mouse; and on finding his efforts resisted by the string, had given vent to the strange, weird cries which had alarmed Mr. Edward.

But now the mouse was lost, and there was nothing left but to finish the night's sleep as comfortably as possible.

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Mr. Edward and the Owl.

See page 71.

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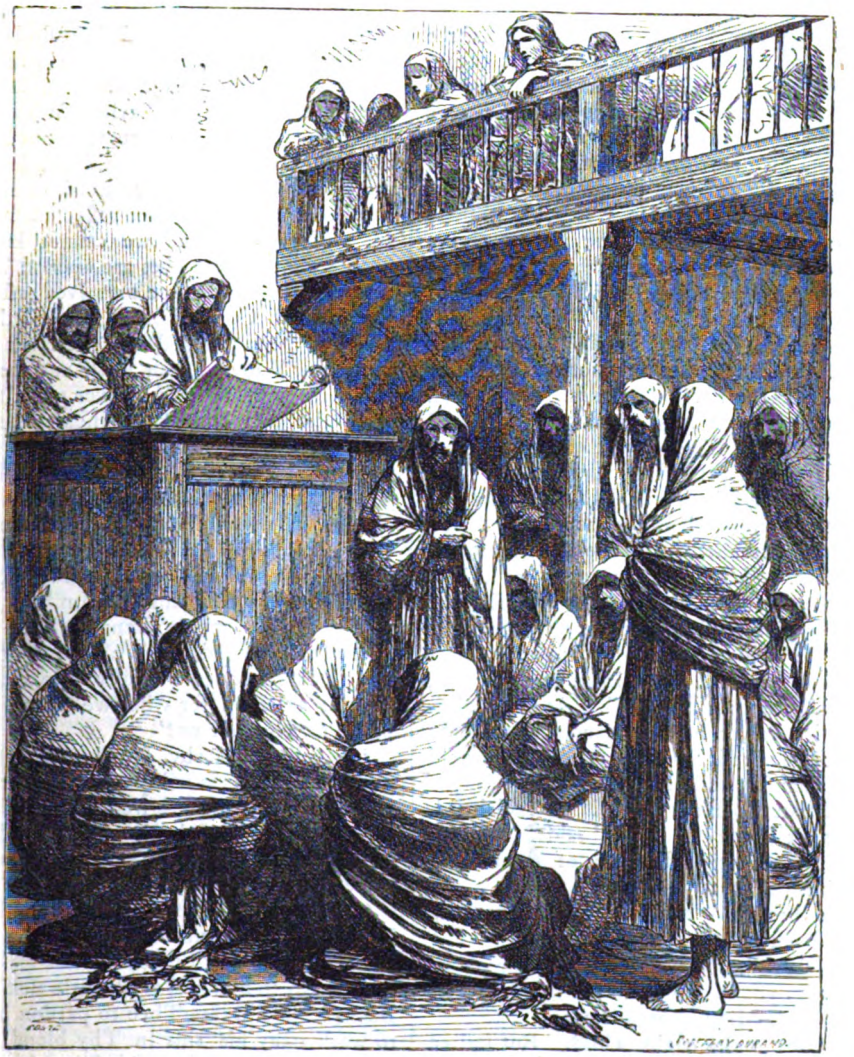

Reading the Law.

See page 79.

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ZACCHY TROUNCE, THE WEE COCKLE BOY.

(*Continued from page* 35.)

NEXT Sunday afternoon, at three o'clock, Zacchy was again standing on Miss Trebartha's doorstep; this time with a clean face and clean boots, but still in the rags and tatters that had touched her so painfully. He was all eagerness to hear about eternal life, and after replying to his new friend's kindly enquiries, that Benny was no better, he began: 'You said Jesus loved our souls, Missus. What is soul?'

'The soul, my boy, is the life,' replied Miss Trebartha, 'that part of us that does not die when the body dies. The soul, Zacchy, is like a very precious jewel, and the body is just like a casket or a box which contains the jewel. But stay, I will show you something which will, I think, make you understand more clearly what I mean.' So saying, she reached from the table a sandal-wood box. 'Look, Zacchy, you see this is only a wooden-box, and suppose we call it 'a body;' now this part inside we will call 'a soul,' she added, displaying to the boy's delighted gaze a lovely large crystal ball, beautifully mounted in gold. As she took it out of its velvet nest, it caught the bright beams of the firelight, and seemed, as she held it in her hand, a ball of living fire.

'O, Missus, ben't it lovely!' he exclaimed.

'Yes, it is very beautiful,' said Miss Trebartha; 'now, my lad, which of the two do you think the most precious?'

'The beautiful sparklin' one, o' course,' returned the child.

'Which, then, do you think most precious, your *soul* or your *body*?' said the lady, gravely.

'My soul, Missus,' he answered.

'You are quite right, child. But unlike this crystal ball, our souls are very impure. Our hearts are very sinful and exceedingly wicked. Do you know this truth, Zacchy?'

'I ben't *very* good, if ye mean that, Missus,' he readily returned; 'fer I have a tould heaps an' heaps o' lies, an' said piles an' piles o' bad swears, so I feer I be a bad, little chap.'

'Well, Zacchy, I am glad to find that you are beginning to see yourself a sinful child, because this knowledge alone makes us feel our great need of the Saviour Who can save us from our sins. There was once a poor little chimney-sweep who did not know how sooty and dirty he was, until one day he happened to see his face reflected in a clear river of water. And we cannot know our filthy state until our eyes are opened by God's Holy Spirit, and we see ourselves reflected in the river of God's Word. The little black sweep at once plunged into the river to wash himself. We, too, can wash and be clean; but there is no water, however pure, that can wash the evil out of our hearts; there is nothing that can take away our sins save the precious blood of Jesus; for "the blood of Jesus Christ," little Zacchy, "cleanseth us from all sin." Now, will you let this Friend wash away your sins? We can never have the eternal life unless we are made pure and white through believing in Him.'

'Iss, Missus, me an' Benny will be washed ef the Friend will do it. We do so want eternal life. But,' he added wistfully, 'we den't knaw how to ax Him fer what we want; will 'e plaise ax Him for us?'

'Yes, little Zacchy, I will gladly ask Him for you. Come, we will pray to Him together, my child.' The gentlewoman and the little ragged cockle boy knelt side by side; the former, holding Zacchy's hand, began, in a voice of earnest supplication:

'O, Lord Jesus, the Friend of little children, I have brought unto Thee little Zacchy Trounce! O Lord, I beseech Thee make Thyself known to him and to his little sick brother Benny! He wants Thee to pardon him and to wash away his sins in Thy blood, and he wants the eternal life which Thou hast promised to them that believe on Thy name. O Heavenly Father, Who so loved the little children as to give up Thy dear Son Jesus to die for them, in order to bring them back to Thy love and to Thy fold, show Zacchy and Benny how willing Thou art to save them and

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to make them Thine! And O, let them be in Thy holy keeping *now* and always, for the Saviour's sake! Amen.'

After they had risen from their knees, Zacchy said, 'Be I washed now sure 'nuff, Missus, and have I got the eternal life?'

'Yes, dear; if you believe,' she answered.

'Missus,' he replied very earnestly, raising his beautiful eyes to her face, 'I *do* believe; what must I do now?'

'Just go on believing and trusting in Jesus, my boy. You will know how to pray to Him now, Zacchy?'

'O, iss,' he returned, 'jist like you did, jist talk to Un like!'

'Yes, Zacchy, that's it, it is just talking to Jesus; you can often do that, for He is *always near* you. No matter where you are, whether on the sand-bar, or in the fishing-boat or elsewhere. He is your loving Friend, remember, and you need not be afraid to tell Him anything. And Zacchy, you must tell Him when you feel inclined to do wrong, as you often will.'

'Missus,' asked Zacchy, suddenly, 'why den't 'e go an' tell all the folk in Corvissack Court about God an' the eternal life? they would be fine an' glad to hear about it, sure! They wen't hurt 'e,' said Zacchy, eagerly noticing a look of hesitation in the lady's face, 'fer ef they wor to hurt 'e, I would fight 'em, I would!'

At the thought of such a possibility; the little fellow drew up his wee self to his full height, and doubled his fist.

Miss Trebartha laughed, and said, 'Thank you, my little knight, for your would-be kindness; but the Lord does not want you to fight for me, for that would be against His laws. We are to love one another, and to love our enemies, and to bless them that curse us.'

Zacchy gave a low significant whistle, as much as to say—that to keep from fighting and to love his enemies was to him an utter impossibility. Then he said, 'I can't do that, Missus. I must give Kishie Nankivell and the other boys a tannin'; they do caal me names, an' say I be ould Tipsy Trounce's boy. Why, Missus, if I dedn't give 'em a tannin' once in a while, I should have no paice o' my life, an' they would caal me a baby, too, an' I couldn't stand thet, Missus.'

'We can do nothing of ourselves, you remember, Zacchy,' said Miss Trebartha, softly; 'but if we go to Jesus, and let His Spirit reign in our hearts, we shall be able to love even our greatest and bitterest enemies. You must try to do this for His sake, my lad.'

The little cockle boy shook his head.

'Poor little wild, untutored heart,' thought the lady sadly, as she watched the working of the small face; 'his fighting proclivities will, I fear, bring him into trouble. But the Lord will strengthen His little soldier.'

Miss Trebartha then rose and left the room, telling Zacchy she would be back in a few minutes. When she reached her bedroom, she lifted the lid of an old carved oak chest, and took from it a little overcoat and cap. Her eyes filled with tears at the sight of those small articles; for their owner, a noble boy, had gone to be with God. 'Little Ernest would have it so,' she said softly to herself; 'and the Lord has need of them.'

On the stairs, Miss Trebartha met an old privileged servant who had grown grey in the service of her father.

'Why, Mistress Caroline, my dear,' she exclaimed, 'as sure as I'm alive that's dear little Master Ernest's coat! What are 'e going to do with it, dear heart?'

'The Lord wants it for a poor little ragged cockle boy, Maisie,' was the quiet answer.

When the kind lady gave Zacchy the little coat and cap, and told him to put them on, he could hardly believe his ears; his eyes sparkled, and he cried, 'O, Missus, thee are too good to me, and I cen't thank 'e enuff. I shen't feel the could now, Missus,' he said, stroking the coat. Why, they wen't knaw me. Benny an' mammy wen't think 'tes their Zacchy!'

'I am glad you are pleased, dear; but you must thank the Lord for them.'

'Ded the Friend give 'em to me, Missus, sure an' sure?'

'Yes, Zacchy.'

'Well, then,' said the boy with great emphasis, 'He es kind.'

So Zacchy went home to tell little Benny the wonderful news he had heard that day.

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THE UNWELCOME BABY, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

CHAPTER IV.—TWO WHOLESOME LESSONS.

THE following spring Mr. Hamilton returned, and John, now old enough to be of service on the farm, again came to live with his uncle. Now and then, to John's great delight, he would be sent on business for his uncle, to a village some distance off, which possessed the rare attraction of a 'store,' as the Yankees call their shops. One day, as John passed this store, there was temptingly displayed outside it a long cane fish-pole. Without stopping to reflect that there was no pond near his uncle's house, he said to himself that he should be perfectly happy if only he could get that beautiful pole. But, alas! he had very little money, and could not pay for it. At length the storekeeper was persuaded to trust him for part of the amount, and he triumphantly carried off the pole, which was very much taller than himself. He expected to be the centre of admiring attention as he rode back with his long pole; and he did attract attention, certainly; for it seemed to him as if all the men, boys and dogs in the village had come out to laugh or bark at his fish-pole. When he reached home, he was greeted with the question, 'Why, John, what do you expect to do with that fish-pole?'

There really did not seem any use for it; and as there was no room in the little house high enough for the cumbersome article to stand in, it was left outside.

When John came to look at his treasure again, he saw, to his dismay, that the cane was split and spoilt by the hot sun. He could not use it for a fish-pole now, but it would make a flute. So John set to work with his knife, and soon cut out something like a flute; but, of course, no music would come. Well, anyhow, it would make nice canes; but he found the canes as useless as the flute; for whether he was at play or at work, he did not want to have his hands encumbered by a cane. And so the long pole was demolished. But the debt remained; and for long enough afterwards, on all conceivable occasions, poor John was jokingly reminded of his 'good long fish-pole.' You may be sure he was always careful after this, before purchasing anything, to ask himself the simple question, 'Of what use will it be?'

John had his eyes open; and one day he learned, by his faculty of observation, a lesson that was of good service to him all through life.

An eagle had built her nest on the top of a tall tree near where John and the farm-labourers used to work. This one was known as 'the fishing eagle,' because every day she used to fly off to the sea-shore—ten miles from her nest—and return to her little ones with the fish she

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had caught for their dinner. Well, one day some of the men determined to make the eagle fish for them instead of for its little ones; and so when she returned with an unusually large fish, they shouted and threw stones till the poor bird was fairly terrified into dropping the fish. John's indignant sympathies were justly aroused, as he watched the bird return to the hungry nestlings without their dinner. The poor little things showed their disappointment by shrill cries, which could not be quieted except by food. So the tired bird set off again, and two hours afterwards John saw her flying wearily back with another fish. The boy was lost in delighted admiration at this display of persevering determination.

'Glorious bird!' he cried aloud; 'what other bird, when weary and discouraged, would do what thou hast done! Others would have drooped. I will learn a lesson from thee. I will try to do something and to be something in the world, and I will never yield to discouragements.'

And though the poor orphan lad did meet with many discouragements, as everybody does who tries to do any real work in the world, he did not forget the eagle's sermon. Yes, the eagle had preached him a powerful sermon from a text that is very little noticed, but one which it is well to think of. You will find it in the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis and the nineteenth verse: 'Gad, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last.' 'If at first you don't succeed, etc.'

ELSIE'S GARDEN.

BY RUTH ELLIOTT.

'I DON'T see what I can do!' said Elsie, forlornly. 'I haven't any money except my sixpence.'

'What sort of doing, Elsie?' Mrs. May came to the door with a hot iron in her hand, and looked down upon her little girl.

'Why, all the good children in the book do nice things,' explained Elsie. 'They are kind to poor people, and help them; I can't.'

'We are poor ourselves,' said her mother.

'Yes, but not like some people. We don't

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go in rags and eat dry bread. There are lots of people much poorer than we are; besides, we are not unhappy.'

'No,' said Mrs. May, going back to her ironing, 'we have enough for ourselves, though there's little to spare. What do you want to do?'

'I don't know: what could I do?'

Her mother did not answer, and Elsie went down to the garden gate to watch the people pass. Presently a boy came whistling along, with a huge bunch of primroses in his hands.

'Where did you get those?' said Elsie; 'what are you going to do with them?'

'Take them home for Nanny; she doesn't often see such a bunch as that,' said the boy, with pride.

'Why doesn't she come and gather them herself? there are lots about.'

'She's lame, and can't walk far. We live right in the middle of the town, and it's a long way out to the fields. I take her flowers every Saturday, pretty nearly; sometimes one sort, sometimes another. At that cottage down there, they often give me a little posy for Nanny. Why don't you have flowers in your garden?'

Elsie looked at the little bit of waste ground, which he called a garden. 'I don't know,' she said, doubtfully; 'we couldn't dig it up, and we can't afford to buy flowers.'

'Flowers don't cost much. If I had that bit of ground I'd grow such flowers! Nanny should have her room full, if she liked.'

The boy went off, and Elsie stood thinking.

'Elsie,' called her mother, 'this basket is ready for you to take to Mrs. Ryland.'

Elsie carried the basket to Mrs. Ryland's back door, and then ran back along the sunny road, but stopped at a little garden gate. A woman was sowing seeds. She looked up, and nodded pleasantly.

'Well, Elsie, how's your mother?'

'Very well, thank you. What seeds are you planting?'

'All sorts. This is mignonette. I always like plenty of mignonette, it's so sweet. I've got a nice lot of nasturtiums for that corner.'

'May I come and see you put them in?'

'You may come and help me if you like.'

'I must go and tell mother. I'll be back in a minute,' said Elsie, well pleased at the idea of helping.

She was soon back, and found it pleasant work to make holes in the earth and drop in the funny-looking nasturtium seeds.

'How nice the garden looks,' she said. 'What are all the things, Mrs. Bryant?'

'Why, you've seen them often enough, Elsie; the wallflowers, and such like, and sweet-peas, and lots more. Some of them I've been sowing now, and some grow on from year to year. The beds look neat, but there isn't much prettiness yet.'

'Do seeds cost much?'

'Dear no! Do you want to grow some flowers? I often think what a pity it is you don't.'

'I'd like to, but the ground is so hard, and we can't dig it up.'

'I should think not. Look here, Elsie, if you really would like to have a garden, I'll get Dan to dig it for you, if you'll be a good girl, and help me mind the baby an hour or two now and then when your mother can spare you; and I'll give you a few seeds to begin with.'

Elsie's breath was almost taken away. 'Really and truly?' she said at last. 'O, I'll mind the baby as often as ever you like, Mrs. Bryant!'

'That's a bargain, then. I'll talk to Dan when he comes in.'

Elsie went home in a state of delighted excitement.

'And may I spend my sixpence in seeds, mother?' she exclaimed, when she had told all about it. 'I could buy such a lot with my sixpence.'

'It is your own; you can do what you like with it. Better buy a few lettuce seeds and radishes, and such like; you might sell them, perhaps, and get your sixpence back.'

Elsie could not sleep for a long time after she went to bed; and when she did sleep, she dreamed that she was a big cabbage, and somebody was going to cut off her head.

(To be continued.)

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A SABBATH SERVICE AT NAZARETH.

ou think these people in the Picture look very unlike those you see in chapel on Sundays: their posture and dress seem so strange. But you must not think they are irreverent because their heads are covered, for you see their feet are bare: to take off the shoes was the Jewish sign of reverence.

These Nazarenes could not go up to the temple to worship, for Jerusalem was a long way off; but every Sabbath day they assembled in their synagogue. The service began with a psalm of praise, and then a portion of the Law was read, and after that some verses from one of the prophets. They had their appointed portions and regular readers. But however devoutly the little congregation might *seem* to hear the Law, God's truth had penetrated no deeper than their ears; for they were proud, revengeful and cruel. Yet God sent them a special message by a special Preacher. The wonderful Prophet of Nazareth came into His own country and into His own synagogue. The great roll containing the writings of the prophets was put into His hands by the minister, or servant of the synagogue. This minister's office was not to conduct the service, but to superintend and to take charge of the Sacred Books. So the Lord Jesus unrolled the volume, and read that wonderful passage in which, hundreds of years before, Isaiah had described His mission. Then He sat down, and began to speak.

And did the people stare about them, as many little folks, yes, and some older ones, do now-a-days, as soon as the sermon begins? No; they all *fastened* their eyes on Him. Perhaps His brethren were there, and very likely His mother and sisters were looking down from the gallery—where the women always sat apart. Every one present was eager to hear what this 'carpenter's son,' Whom they had known as a boy, will say to them. And what did He say? 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.'

The people could not help wondering at His 'gracious words;' but they did not feel that they needed the blessings of which He had been reading, and they could not believe that He was able to teach or heal them. Read to the end of the story as St. Luke tells it in the fourth chapter of his Gospel, and you will wonder at the strange conduct of these Nazarenes, and think how differently you would have treated the Lord Jesus.

But I want each of you to ask one question: 'How *do* I treat Him? Do I love Him for His "gracious words," or do I neither think nor care anything about Him?'

G. E. S.

'Good for Evil.'

'Mamma,' said little Annie, 'please give me two apples for lunch. I want to give one to Jane Wood.'

'Certainly, my dear; but why do you want to give Jane one?'

'Because she stole one out of my basket yesterday, and I want her not to be tempted any more, for our teacher told us if we were sincere in praying "Lead us not into temptation," we should not only keep out of the way of evil ourselves, but try to keep others from being tempted; and, I think, if I give Jane an apple, she will not want to steal any more.'

The apple was given, and a little while after Jane came to Annie with a very penitent expression on her face.

'Won't you please take this apple back again?' she said. 'I suppose it is mine now as you gave it to me, and I want to pay back the one I stole away from you yesterday.'

Jane never stole again. Annie's kindness saved her.

The Young Berean's Corner.

We want all our young Bereans to search the Scriptures again.

A beautiful book will be given as a prize for the best, and another for the second best, list of *instances of Answered Prayers recorded in Scripture.*

Competitors must be under fourteen, and must ask a parent or teacher to certify that the answers have been found without assistance. The name, address and age of the sender must be given with each paper.

The papers must be sent to the Editor, 1, Grayling-road, Stoke Newington, not later than May 18th.

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Song of Praise for Children.

Joyful.

1. Praise God! ye lit - tle chil - dren, Your great and Heav'n-ly King;
2. Praise God! ye lit - tle chil - dren, He loves to hear you sing;

Oh! raise your ear - nest voi - ces, And glad - ly, sweet - ly sing.
In songs of ho - ly glad - ness Let your sweet voi - ces ring!

He gives you ev - 'ry bless - ing, He heeds your ev - 'ry cry;
Bring to your lov - ing Sa - viour Your sim - ple, hap - py strains,

The wise and great Cre - a - tor Of earth, and sea, and sky.
He bends His ear to lis - ten, Though Lord of all He reigns.

3. Praise God! ye little children,
For all His gracious care;
He waits to hear the singing,
And Jesus loves your prayer.
Your gentle, faithful Shepherd
Knows all His lambs and sheep,
And over all the children
A constant watch will keep.

4. Praise God! ye little children,
Praise God! for all His love,
Praise God! for all the blessings
He sends you from above.
Look up with joyous glances,
With bright and shining eyes;
Lift up your songs of praises
Until they reach the skies!

ETHELWYN.

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JUNE, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

Phil and Gwennie.

See page **82.**

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CRABS' ISLAND.

At the entrance of a small bay on the rugged coast of North Wales stretches a long, flat line of rocks, known to the fishermen as Crabs' Island. It takes its name from the great number of crabs and other shell-fish caught there. When the sea is out, the water round the Island is so shallow that it may be easily waded through. But during the high tides, and when the sea is full, it is really no island at all, its highest point of rock being buried under many feet of water. It was the afternoon of a bright summer day, when a small rowing-boat shot swiftly round the farthest point of the little bay. Its only occupant was a tall, active Welsh girl, who handled her oars skilfully, and with the ease of one well-accustomed to the work. This was Gwennie Thomas, old Matt Thomas' only child, a dark-eyed, comely girl of fifteen. Her picturesque Welsh dress suited her well,—the striped black and red gown, the large checked apron and snowy neckerchief. She had taken off her cockle-shell hat, and had laid it on the seat beside her. Every one in the village yonder had a good word to say for Gwennie; all except one family who lived very near her father's cottage; they seemed to bear no good-will towards warm-hearted Gwennie.

These Bevans were an idle, thriftless set, and their shiftless ways often earned them the contempt of their tidier neighbours. Doubtless the impulsive Welsh girl had shown her scorn, for Gwennie was sometimes a little too hasty in speech. So a sort of dislike had crept up between the two families, especially between Gwennie and the eldest son, a lad about her own age, who seldom lost an opportunity of annoying or injuring her. Gwennie disliked this boy as much as it was in her kindly disposition to dislike any one. She hardly acknowledged it even to herself, for she was a good Christian girl, and knew well that the feeling was sinful. There was a shadow over the brightness of Gwennie's bonnie face this bright afternoon. Her father had been taken suddenly ill that morning, and although not dangerously so, the thought of continued sickness, and perhaps death, made Gwennie's loving heart sink with fear. She had left him in charge of a neighbour, while she had rowed round the point to the next village to ask an old friend of her father's to take charge of his fishing-boat until he was restored to health.

She was aroused from her sad musing by loud shouting, apparently quite near. The voice seemed to come from Crabs' Island, and looking towards it she saw a boy standing on its slippery black rocks waving a red pocket-handkerchief, while he shouted at the top of his voice. Gwennie knew him directly, it was her enemy, Phil Bevan. Just as quickly she guessed what had happened: he had gone on the Island crabbing, hadn't noticed the tide rising, and so had let the water get too deep for him to wade through. Gwennie ceased rowing and rested on her oars a moment.

'It would serve him right if I left him there,' she murmured, half aloud; 'the tide must be almost full now, and would be out again long before it's dark. Only yesterday he cut father's new net in five different places. It would be a very good punishment to make him stay out there a couple of hours.' But better feelings came; should she, who was a servant of God, return evil for evil, and act no better than Phil might in her place? Gwennie felt ashamed of herself; and grasping the oars more firmly she rowed quickly towards the Island. Directly the boat touched the land the lad sprang in, saying sullenly as he did so, 'I thought you warn't coming at all,

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you took so long a making up your mind.' Not a word of thanks! Gwennie's cheek flushed again, but with anger this time. 'Rude, ungrateful fellow,' she thought; 'I half wish I had left him here.' But ungracious as were Phil's words, his actions were not quite so bad; for he would not allow Gwennie to row, but taking the oars from her without a word, he sent the boat rapidly along by the force of his own strong arms. The two for some time sat in awkward silence, neither seeming to care to speak. Presently Phil said, 'It would ha' been pretty awkward for me soon if you hadn't happened to come along jest now; for the tide would ha' been full in another hour or so.'

'Well, 'twould only have kept you there a couple of hours,' said Gwennie, sharply; then suddenly a new and terrible idea struck her: 'You don't mean as its high tide this evening, Phil?'

'Yes, I do,' answered Phil, composedly. 'I wonder you forgot that, so knowing as you are about boats and sich like.'

Phil was actually getting grateful, and was making a rough attempt at a compliment.

'No, indeed, I didn't know it,' said Gwennie. 'But O, Phil! would the top of Crabs' Island have been soon covered?'

'Ay, that it would! I certainly wor in a fix; for you see I can't swim much to boast of, more's the shame; and if you hadn't ha' come up then, I don't know what I should ha' done; though I didn't thankee much at the time.'

'O, Phil! don't thank me,' said poor Gwennie. 'I'm a wicked girl; I was near leaving you stay on the Island to serve you out for spoiling father's net, and then you would ha' been drowned; but I didn't know it was high tide.'

'Well, never mind,' said Phil, good-naturedly; 'here I am safe and sound, without so much as a wetting,' for Gwennie's real distress touched his heart.

Just then the boat grounded on the beach. Gwennie sprang out, but waited silently while Phil moored the boat. 'I hope you'll forgive me,' she said in humbler tones than the high-spirited Welsh maiden had ever used before. Phil was now putting the boat's oars away in the little court before her father's cottage.

'Ay, of course, I will; but there's nothing to forgive, Gwennie; and mayhap we'll be better friends now; but mind, *I* didn't cut your father's net,' and Phil turned away.

Gwennie felt he must not go without another word.

'Phil,' said she, impulsively, 'I'll never speak another word agen you as long as I live, and if we ar'n't better friends it won't be my fault.' Then she ran quickly into the house before Phil could make any reply. Full of repentance for her former revengeful feelings, mingled with anxiety about her father, she quickly mounted the stairs. To her great joy her father was much better, and sitting by the fire in an old arm-chair alone. Then kneeling beside him, Gwennie poured forth her story into his sympathizing ears. The good old fisherman softly stroked her glossy braids as he listened silently till she had finished. Then he said, 'Well, Gwennie, lass, you ought indeed to thank our Heavenly Father that you were saved from a sin which would have been so terrible in its consequences. It will teach you a lesson on the sinfulness of revenge. And, for the future, we will try and be a bit more friendly to this poor lad, prap's we can help him to find the Friend we have found.' 'I will never think ill of him again, father,' said Gwennie, as she rose from her knees.

Gwennie and her father kept their word; and so strong is the influence of kind words and kindlier interest, that a gradual change took place in rough Phil Bevan. At the old fisherman's request he began to read his unused Bible; soon he learned to love it; and before he reached manhood he became an earnest, humble member of the Church of God. AID.

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ELSIE'S GARDEN.

BY RUTH ELLIOTT.

(*Continued from page* 78.)

When Elsie awoke the next morning, she heard a strange sound in the garden; and running to the window, saw Dan busily at work digging the hard ground. It did not take her long to dress and run out.

'O Dan! how good of you! When can I begin to plant my seeds?' she cried.

Dan laughed. 'Not before the ground is ready. What are you going to plant? buttercups and daisies?'

'No, indeed! nice sweet flowers like yours,' replied Elsie, indignantly. 'Mrs. Bryant has given me some, and I have sixpence of my own. How many will that buy?'

'Just half a big geranium! I saw some marked up a shilling each in town. But I'm afraid half a one won't grow, or may be it'll grow all on one side, or all leaves and no flowers.'

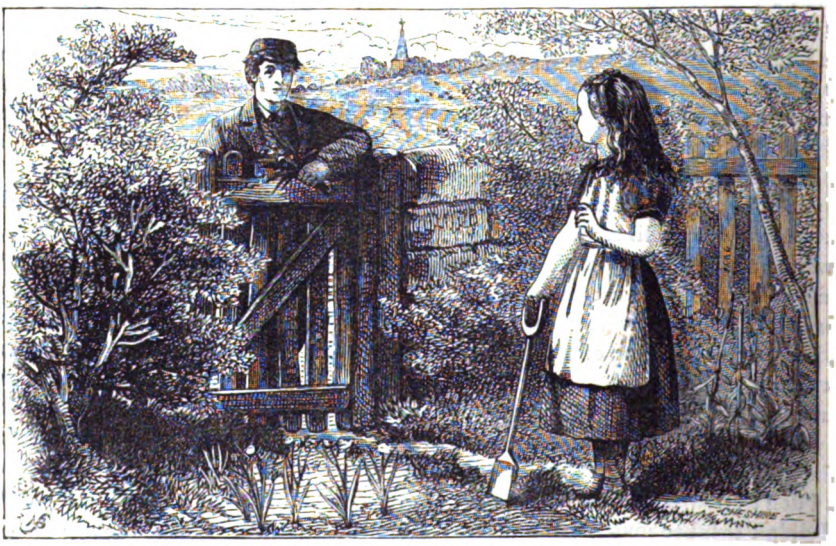
'Now, Dan! don't laugh at me.'

'Well, 'pends upon what sort of seed you want, anyhow; some's cheap and some's dear.'

'Mother said lettuce and radish, and I should like mustard and cress, and carrots and turnips, and onions, and peas and beans, and—'

'You'd best stop there. I reckon the sixpence will about buy one of each,' said Dan, with a twinkle in his eye. 'You leave it to me, Elsie.'

It took two or three days to get the ground



ready, and one evening Dan came home with a basket-full of little green things which looked to Elsie like weeds. There were also half-a-dozen little packets of seeds, and some peas and beans.

'There!' said Dan, setting them down. 'You'll have a grand garden, Elsie. Miss Mary gave me all those little plants for you, and some of the seeds.'

'O Dan! how kind you are! What makes you?' cried Elsie, gratefully.

'There was a little girl once,' said Dan, smiling, 'who cried because a baby was ill, and ran all the way to the Grange through a thunder-storm to fetch the father, and she nursed the baby, and was such a good little nurse that the father made up his mind to do something nice for her some day.'

'And it is something nice! it's the nicest thing that ever happened to me! I love my garden, Dan.'

'You will love it more when the flowers are up. Now I'll show you how to plant the things and sow the seeds.'

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Elsie admiring her Flowers. *See page* 86.

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Never was a garden more anxiously watched than Elsie's. Morning, noon and night she looked for the first tiny green shoots above the sweet brown earth, and when at last they really did appear she was so glad that she was obliged to run and tell Dan. After that, the sun and air and rain made them grow fast, and when the warm summer came the garden was a pretty sight. And in the summer time when the sweet peas and white lilies were in bloom, it certainly did look lovely.

'Halloa! here's a change!' said a voice at the gate one evening, and there stood the primrose boy, as Elsie called him; but this time his hands were full of wild hyacinths and orchids.

'Where have you been?' said Elsie. 'I have not seen you for months: not since primrose time. Is n't my garden pretty?'

'I've been ill: this is the first time I've been out in the country. Yes: I never saw such a change in a place,' said the boy. He looked very pale and tired, and he leaned wearily against the gate, his eyes roving over the sweet flowers.

'Would you like to rest?' asked Elsie.

'No, thank you; I want to get back. Nanny will be looking out for me. These are for her.'

'Is she better?'

'No: she never will be. What are you going to give me for her? some of the pinks and sweet peas?'

Elsie looked horrified. 'Pick my flowers! Why, I never pick them except a few on Sunday.'

'What is the use of them? Nanny would so like some of those pinks; they're so sweet. You won't miss them.'

But Elsie shook her head, and drew back. 'I can't spare any. Those hyacinths are pretty.'

'But not sweet like the pinks, and Nanny loves sweet flowers. Won't you give me some?'

'What a disagreeable boy!' thought Elsie, turning away from the gate, and pretending to look for snails among the beans; 'I wish he'd go away.'

After waiting a few minutes, evidently hoping she would change her mind, he did go away; but so wearily, dragging one foot after the other, that Elsie's conscience smote her.

'I don't care!' she thought, as she watched him out of sight. But she did care in her heart.

'What boy was that?' asked Elsie's mother.

'I don't know his name. I've seen him often; he comes to get flowers for his lame sister.'

'Is he a town boy?'

'Yes: his sister can't walk to the fields, so he comes for her.'

'He must be a kind boy. What did you give him?'

'Nothing,' said Elsie, feeling uncomfortable.

Mrs. May looked surprised. 'I thought you wanted to do something for somebody; seems to me you have lost a chance now.'

'But I didn't want to pick my flowers.'

'No; you would like to give poor folks bread; and those who have bread to give would rather give coal; and those that have coal want to give clothes; and so it goes on and nobody gets anything. If you mean to wait till you can give coal and blankets, you'd best make up your mind at once to do nothing.'

It was not often Mrs. May spoke so energetically, and Elsie did not like it at all. She went out and tried to forget all about it; but even watering her precious flowers did not put it out of her thoughts.

Presently Mrs. Bryant came up with the baby, and stopped for a chat and a rest. Elsie took the baby, and sat down to listen. Mrs. Bryant had been to the town, and there was plenty to tell and hear.

'I'm right sorry I wasn't a little earlier home,' she said; 'I met that boy, Tom Berner, along the road with a bunch of wild flowers for poor Nanny. If I'd been home he should have had something else.'

'Do you know him?' asked Mrs. May, with a glance at her little daughter.

'Just by speaking to him at the gate pretty often, and giving him flowers. He's such a pleasant-spoken boy, and a right good boy I know by his kindness to his lame sister.'

Elsie's conscience gave her such pricks that she was glad to carry the baby down the road.

'What's the use of having a garden if I'm to give all my flowers away?' she thought; and she felt so cross with every one that something very like two tears would come into her eyes. 'I wish that boy wouldn't

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come down our road. I don't believe he has a lame sister,' she said aloud.

But as she said the words, something inside her whispered, 'Don't make it worse by telling stories, Elsie! Selfishness is quite bad enough by itself.'

'It isn't selfishness,' she said.

'Yes, it is; you are selfish and unkind!' Elsie began talking to the baby.

'You have a garden full of beautiful sweet flowers, and you won't give any to a poor lame girl who lives among the smoke and dirt of a large town, and can't walk out into the green fields.'

'I wonder if she is a little girl,' thought Elsie. 'I wonder where she lives. I wonder—O dear! I wish I could think of something else.'

(To be concluded.)

THE SIMPLE RABBIT AND THE CRAFTY CROW.

month or two ago, you may remember reading that rabbits were very unsuspecting creatures, with neither wit nor strength to defend them from their enemies. Our friend Mr. Edward, the naturalist, once saw a poor bunnie most craftily caught with guile.

A young rabbit had come out of his burrow, and was merrily frisking and playing, without thought of danger, when down swooped a hooded crow. Now these crows eat rabbits; but this bird approached this little creature in a most friendly manner, jumping and frisking, as if anxious to join in his game. At length he got upon the rabbit's back, as though he wished to have a ride, but the hoodie's real object was to gain a good position for reaching poor bunnie's head. A few hard pecks from his bill on that tender part soon killed the little animal.

I think my little readers can find out for themselves the moral of this true story, which seems so much like a fable.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

III.—A TALK ABOUT WHITSUNTIDE.

HY is to-day called Whit Sunday, Auntie?' asked Willie, as our friends at Hill Farm settled down for another Bible-lesson.

'Well, I have heard several explanations, but the usual one is, that in the olden time large numbers of people were baptized at this season; and as they wore white dresses, the name of Whit, or White Sunday was given to this day.'

'Isn't Whit Sunday the same as Pentecost?' asked Katie.

'Pentecost is the name of the feast of the Jews held on the fiftieth day after the Passover. At the Passover they presented to God the first sheaf of their harvest; and at Pentecost they brought thank-offerings for the safe gathering of the wheat. You see the people in the Picture are bringing fruit and flowers to the temple. It was something like the harvest-festivals that are held in our churches.'

'But,' said Willie, 'the hymns and sermon this morning were not about the harvest, but all about God giving us the Holy Ghost.'

'Yes, because our Whitsuntide is not like the Jews' harvest-feast, but in memory of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples as they were gathered together praying at Jerusalem. Katie shall read it to us. The account is given in the second chapter of Acts.'

Katie read the first four verses, and then Pollie asked,—

'How could they "speak with other tongues;" wouldn't their own tongues do?'

'"Tongues" here means languages. The disciples began to speak in a number of different languages which they had never learnt. In the next two verses we read how, when this happened, the multitude of people of all nations who were in Jerusalem at the feast came together to hear the disciples talking; and when they listened, they were astonished to find that each man heard the very language that was spoken in his own

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The Simple Rabbit and the Crafty Crow. See page 87.

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Peter Preaching at Pentecost. *See page* 87.

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country. The people seemed to have been as much surprised as we should be if some of our farm servants were to begin to talk in French, German, Spanish and Italian, so that a company of foreigners would all hear their own tongue spoken.'

'How was it there were so many foreigners in Jerusalem?' Willie asked. 'There is a black man in our Picture.'

'There would be many foreigners living in Jerusalem, but others had come up on purpose to be at the feast of Pentecost.'

'What did the disciples talk about?' said Pollie.

'The wonderful works of God,' Katie answered promptly.

'The great subject,' said Aunt Kate, 'would be the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus; that *wonderful work* by which God made an atonement for our sins.'

'All who heard were very much astonished; and we are told in the twelfth verse, that they said one to another, "What meaneth this?" Others mocked, and said the disciples had been drinking.'

'But a good many believed, Auntie.'

'Yes; after Peter's sermon about three thousand people believed and were baptized, and so became Christians.'

'And how long did the cloven tongues sit upon them?' said Willie.

'The Bible doesn't tell us, but I should think not long. Perhaps they just rested on the heads of the disciples, and then vanished.'

'Then did the Holy Spirit go away too?' asked Pollie.

'O, no! the Spirit was promised to abide with them for ever. The cloven tongues and the rushing wind were only signs, not the Spirit Himself. He came to dwell in their hearts, and in the hearts of God's people in all ages.'

'Does the Spirit dwell in men's hearts now?'

'Yes; in the hearts of all His children the Holy Spirit dwells as in a temple. Having the Spirit of Christ is the mark of our being God's people.'

'Does He come to children, too?' asked Katie.

Yes, indeed; He loves to come to children, if they will admit Him, and listen to His voice; but He will not dwell with those who love evil, and do not wish to be God's children.'

'I suppose we must be very good before the Holy Spirit will come to us?' said Willie, solemnly.

'If you wait till then, Willie, the Holy Spirit will never come to you at all.'

'Why, Auntie?'

'Because He only can make us very good. He comes to those who feel they are very bad, and wish to be better. He tells them of the love of Jesus, and how God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them. Then He helps them to forsake their sins, and teaches them to do right.'

'Does God make us good all at once?' asked Katie.

'He would do so, if we were willing; but generally we are so foolish that it takes a long time to cure us of our sins.'

'I do wish Jesus Himself were living here; so that we could see Him and hear Him tell us what we ought to do and what we ought not,' said Katie, earnestly.

'Many people have wished that, dear. But it is better for us to have the Holy Spirit; for His voice in our hearts is really the voice of Jesus. We need not go a long journey, like some of those of whom we read in the Gospels, to find Jesus; but we have only to *think* our prayers, and He hears them; and though you have not seen the Saviour's kind look,—

"Yet still to His footstool in prayer you may go,
And ask for a share in His love;
And if you now earnestly seek Him below,
You shall see Him and hear Him above."

'Now let us sing that beautiful hymn,—

"Eternal Spirit, come
Into Thy meanest home;
From Thy high and holy place,
Where Thou dost in glory reign,
Stoop, in condescending grace,
Stoop to the poor heart of man."'

And this was Aunt Kate's prayer:

'O, Lord God, our Father in heaven, we are only little children, and yet we thank Thee that Thou dost love us; and we want to love Thee in return. Give us, we

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beseech Thee, Thy Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts, to teach us what is right, and to lead us in the paths of life, for the sake of the Lord Jesus, Who went away that the Comforter might come unto us, and be with us for ever. Amen.'

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER VI.—GUISE PARK.

TUESDAY morning dawned fair and bright, and the children were up soon after six. They found a good deal of time on their hands, for they were not to set out till ten. Sir Lionel Morland intended to have a really superior ceremony, and spared no expense. A carriage came for Mrs. Clifton, Miss Hatterleigh, and the little girls; and, owing to the respect which the baronet felt for Mr. Clifton, it took its place very near the front of the procession. Mr. Clifton and Mr. Henry walked at the head of their school, which was the largest in Heathlands, and were followed by several other schools, the town council, the police, the fire brigade, and, apparently, most of the Heathlanders; while the waving of flags, the music of the brass bands, and the cheers of the excited people, produced a very lively effect. There was a little formal business in handing over the park to the trustees, then athletic sports began, with useful prizes for the victors. Little Ellen and her party gravely inspected the cheap and straggling flowers which the poor people had brought from their windows. To Fleda's great delight, one of the highest prizes was adjudged to poor, wan, little Phebe Stokes. On her father carrying her up to receive it, the Honourable Ellen told him to wait till the last, when she easily persuaded her father to change the set of gardening tools, which would only have been a mockery, for a large perambulator, in which the child could lie comfortably.

Fleda tried to make friends with the little lady, but she was only disposed to be patronizing. Fleda, who was, if anything, too straightforward and blunt, soon decided that an affected, drawling playmate like that would soon spoil the charm even of Morland Castle. Seizing the first opportunity to slip away, she began to look for her brothers among the thousands of people scattered over the park. Alfred had heard Mary's version of the quarrel, and was much displeased with his fiery little sister; in fact, the quiet, studious boy could hardly make fair allowance for the temptations and temperament of such a volcano. Dick, impulsive, brave and generous, never brooded or carried malice; but he lost his own temper too often, and regained it too quickly, to make him a severe judge. Fortunately Dick was the first to meet Fleda, and the two wandered on, chatting as gayly as though trowels were never manufactured.

'I say, Flidkins, I was looking for one of you girls. I have seen such a queer-looking old woman; do come and look at her, she is in that arbour.'

They walked slowly past the entrance. Three dowdily-dressed children, who seemed to answer to the names of Jane, Rodney, and Mirza, were talking in low tones, and glancing uneasily at a tall, masculine-looking woman, who was very dark, with wavy black hair, and a Spanish cast of features. Her height was exaggerated rather than toned down by her dress, which was of black cloth. A tall beaver hat, and a short, plain riding-whip, increased the effect; but the latter was evidently intended for use in walking as well as riding. Some muttered observation of Rodney's offended the woman, who, starting to her feet, administered a smart cut across his shoulder with the utmost promptness. Fleda shuddered, and Dick clenched his fists involuntarily; but Rodney only winced, without uttering a sound. His sisters looked on apathetically, as though they were quite used to it.

Several times they saw this little party again that day, and on many following days, for they almost haunted Guise Park.

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When they had got a safe distance, and had begun to talk again, Fleda gave Dick an account of her conversation with the younger mistress of the festivities, but was suddenly checked on turning a corner by seeing the young lady in question just before her.

'I am glad you have returned, Miss Fleda; I was in search of you. I and my lady friends are going to give buns and milk to the poor children. They are all waiting to begin; you are the last.'

'I am sure I am very sorry. I didn't know you would want me again,' said Fleda, in a quick, earnest tone, that was a great contrast to the other child's affected drawl. 'Perhaps Dick can help you, too. He will, with pleasure.'

'Pray who is Dick?' was the haughty question.

Fleda flushed, and turning to her brother, said, 'I beg your pardon, Dick, for offering your help to a lady you are not acquainted with. The Honourable Ellen Morland, Master Richard Clifton, of Heathlands College. That basket is quite too heavy for Louie to carry. If you will take it from her, she can go round with you and hand out the buns.'

Dick took the hint, made a superb bow to the young lady so coolly introduced to him, and vanished, with the firm resolve to allow some time to elapse before he renewed the acquaintance.

'You ought never to introduce a gentleman to a lady without first knowing whether it would be agreeable to her, Miss Fleda; but I dare say you did not know that, so I will look over it this time.'

Fleda was more mortified than she cared to show on finding that she had made a mistake; but she felt that now there was nothing but facing it through.

'You may trust to my discretion, Miss Ellen. I should not have done so with a comparative stranger, but as the son of your father's friend you already know him; and, as your guest to-day, you are, of course, glad to be able to address him by name.'

'It doesn't signify,' retorted the proud girl, who felt incensed by Fleda's plain speaking and common sense. 'As it's your brother, I don't mind; but, I assure you, I have no desire to call all these people by name because they happen to be here to-day.'

Dick came up for a fresh supply of buns; and judging by Fleda's face that she was a good deal nettled, he remarked meditatively as he passed her:

"For 'tis in good manners, and not in good dress,
That the truest gentility lies."'

'Of course it is, Dick,' she answered with a brightening face; 'and I don't call her a real lady, though she has a handle to her name.'

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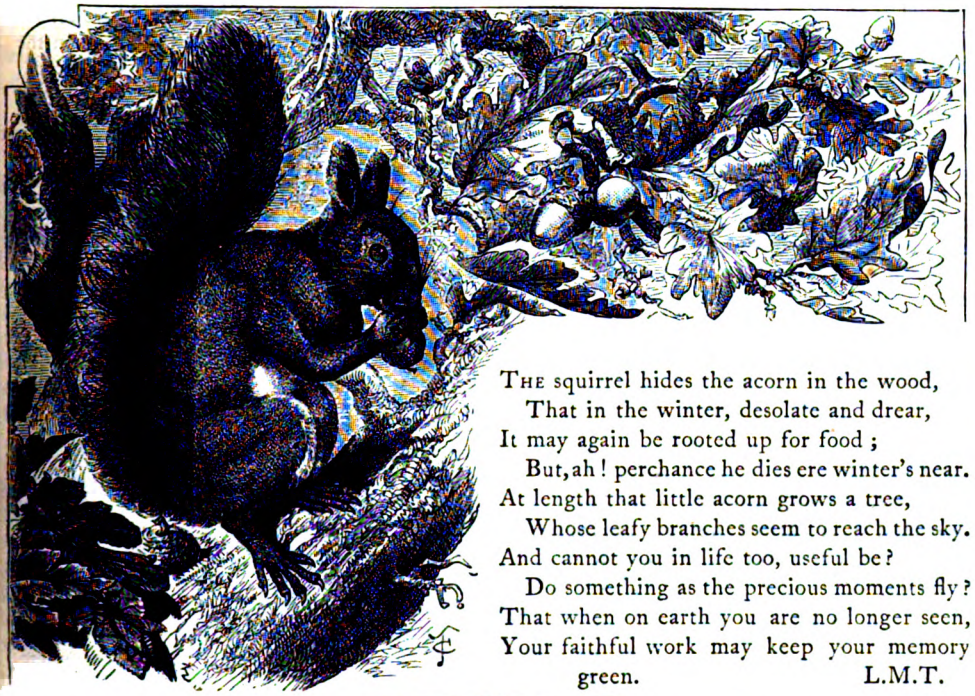
NOW IS THE TIME FOR DOING.



THE squirrel hides the acorn in the wood,
That in the winter, desolate and drear,
It may again be rooted up for food;
But, ah! perchance he dies ere winter's near.
At length that little acorn grows a tree,
Whose leafy branches seem to reach the sky.
And cannot you in life too, useful be?
Do something as the precious moments fly?
That when on earth you are no longer seen,
Your faithful work may keep your memory green.

L.M.T.

ZACCHY TROUNCE, THE WEE COCKLE BOY.

(*Concluded from page 75.*)

THE next day was bright and fine, almost like summer. In the afternoon Miss Trebartha went into the plantation to pick some of the golden daffodils and sweet violets and primroses which grew beneath the shadow of the old oaks, to take to Zacchy's sick brother.

'Corvissack Court is no fit place for gentlefolk, Mistress Caroline,' said the old servant, fidgeting about her mistress as she was putting a few dainties in a basket for the sick child.

'The Lord Jesus Who is sending me there will take care of me, Maisie, and will bring me safely home again,' returned Miss Trebartha, cheerfully. But Maisie gave her head an ominous shake.

Miss Trebartha had little difficulty in finding Corvissack Court. It was far more disreputable than she expected; most of the houses appeared to her unfit for human habitation, and the poor little ragged children that swarmed in the court were evidently uncared for. Miss Trebartha felt quite nervous, and would have turned back, but for the thought of the sick boy, who, she believed, would be expecting her; so she summoned up her courage, and asked a bold-looking woman who was standing on a doorstep with a baby in her arms, if she would kindly tell her where Eber Trounce lived.

'Eber Trounce, ded'ee say, Mum? ef et be he you d' want he bean't in, but he do live up there, that house with the heap o' mussels avore the door.' The house indicated was the

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last one in the court. Stepping over the heap of mussels as best she could, Miss Trebartha knocked at the door, and in answer, a little thin voice called out, 'Walk in;' so in she walked, and found herself in a low, narrow, comfortless room, which looked almost destitute of furniture; a part of the room was taken up by a large four-post bed, and at the other end a table and two chairs, the latter filled with fishing-nets. Down one side of the room was a row of packing-cases, and by the fire-place a washing-tray. All this Miss Trebartha took in at a glance. But to her surprise she saw nothing human; at length she heard a cough, and to her great amazement saw a little head raised from the washing-tub, and a pair of blue eyes watching her curiously. She went up to where the child lay, and looked down compassionately on the wee white face that was so like Zacchy's. 'Why did you not speak?' she said.

'I was afeer'd, and covered up my face when you comed in,' returned the boy, nervously.

'You are not going to be afraid of me now, I hope; we must be friends, for Zacchy has told me a great deal about his little sick brother, Benny. Where is Zacchy?'

'He's gone out to sell the cockles.'

'So, then, you're left in by yourself?'

'Iss,' returned the boy, 'and I've ben feeling fine an' wisht.'

'The Lord Jesus *knew* how wisht and lonely you were feeling, Benny, and He has sent me here to stay a little time with you. Did Zacchy tell you about Jesus?'

'Iss, ma'am; yesternight when faather and mother was aslaip, he comed over by my bed and tould me about Un.'

'Were you glad to hear of Him, Benny?'

'Iss, and I've been thinkin' o' Un all the day,' he said, looking up with shining eyes.

'What have you been thinking about Him, dear?' she asked tenderly.

'O, lot o' things! I *do* want Jesus to love me too,' he returned eagerly.

'He *does* love you, my child; He has *always* loved you, and He wants *you* to love Him in return. You will love Him, won't you, Benny; you and Zacchy together?' Benny nodded by way of consent. 'What are those other thoughts you have been thinking, dear?'

'I've been a-wonderin' ef He made all the shrimps, and the little fishes that play in the pullans, and the baby-crabs on the beach; 'cause Zacchy said He made the gowlden stars—the kind stars thet laugh down on me in the dark.'

'He made *everything*, Benny; the shrimps and fishes and crabs, and He made the stars also. Would you like to hear something more about Him, dear?'

'Iss, dearly,' he said eagerly.

'Well, Benny, before we begin I should like a seat.'

'You'll find a cricket under the bed,' replied the boy.

Having found the said 'cricket,' or stool, she put it by the side of the washing-tray, and seated herself on it, and taking hold of his tiny, thin hand, said, 'I will first give you the flowers which I have brought. Are you fond of flowers?' she asked, giving them to him.

'O, I do love the dear, lovely flowers!' he said, taking them eagerly, and hugging them to himself. 'Where ded 'em grow to?'

'In our plantation, Benny; when you are better you must come and see the place where they grew.'

'Zacchy tould me *He* could make ma better,' said the child cheerfully, 'and heerd un axing Un to this mornin', and he also axed eternal life fer us both.' Those simple words sent a thrill of gladness through Miss Trebartha's heart, for they were to her a token of the reality of the little cockle boy's belief in the Lord Jesus.

'Heere I be, Benny dear,' said a voice outside the door.

'That's Zacchy!' cried Benny, with a look of delight. At that moment the door was pushed open and Zacchy made his appearance. 'I said I wouldn't be very long, and—' his speech was cut short on seeing the visitor.

'Aw! es that you, Missus?' he exclaimed, 'there, I said you would be sure to come.'

'Yes, Zacchy; you see I have kept my promise, and Benny and I have become fast friends already.'

He set his basket on the floor and came

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over and took his seat astride the washing-tray, at the same time giving to Benny a paper of dark-looking sweet-stuff, with the words, 'Some o' Miss Tonkin's cledgey,* Benny; mind you ait et, 'tes fine an nice; her gied ma a bit to taste.'

'Have 'a been telling un about *the Friend?*' he asked, turning to the lady.

'We've been talking a little about Him, Zacchy, and I was on the point of beginning the story when you came in.'

'Than go a-head, plaise Missus; I am glad I'm en time to hecar et too.'

I cannot tell you how attentively and intently those children listened to 'that sweet story of old,' which they then heard almost for the first time, and it was not told in vain.

'Hope *He* wull send 'e again soon,' said the sick child, when the kind lady was wishing him good-bye.

'Ask the Lord to, Benny, and I am sure He will, if it be good for you. And don't forget, darling, that it was He Who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."'

'Zacchy,' said Miss Trebartha, as he was opening the door for her, 'that in the basket is for Benny; try and get him to eat a little of it. Come and see me soon, and we will try to make him more comfortable than he is now. A soft pillow instead of that hard thing he lies on would rest his little weary head, and a blanket will keep him warmer than those sacks.' Zacchy tried to speak his thanks, but she hastened away.

Do you ask if Miss Trebartha ever went to Corvissack Court again? O, yes! she went there very often to tell them of the Saviour, and by and by other little children of the court flocked in to hear of Him too, (kind Mrs. Trounce was quite willing they should); and when the mothers of those little ones heard the sound of His saving name, they asked to be allowed to come as well. Did Benny die? No, he did not; for when the hedges in lane and field were lovely with the blackthorn and the may, he began to get better, and before very long health came back to his weary little frame, for it pleased the gracious God to answer prayer. But did Zacchy and Benny love the Saviour always? We thankfully say the latter did, he ever kept faithful to his Lord. He seemed never to have forgotten the Saviour's tenderness and love to him through those weary weeks of suffering. But alas for Zacchy! For a while he too remained faithful and followed closely in the footsteps of Jesus; but when his twin brother was quite recovered, he became careless and negligent in prayer, consequently he went back to his old paths, which Miss Trebartha and Benny hoped he had forsaken for ever. Were it not that the Good Shepherd loved that little heedless lamb with a great and boundless love he would have perished. After a while the earnest prayers that Miss Trebartha and Benny offered were fully answered, and they had the unspeakable joy of seeing him brought back a penitent child to the feet of Jesus. O, how grieved he was that he had wandered away from Him! And O, how earnestly he prayed that he might never wander again!

Many years have passed since then, and Zacchy and Benny are still walking in the narrow way which leads to life eternal.

NELLIE CORNWALL.

* 'Cledgey:' a kind of toffee.

The Golden Rule.

BY THE REV. J. BRIGG.

I do not care how finely dressed
A girl may chance to be;
If with no kindly nature blest,
She's not the girl for me.

I do not care how sweet her face,
How bright her golden hair,
Absent is childhood's greatest grace
If love be wanting there.

When ruby lips, that should respond
The kindly-sweet 'I will,'
Are mute to all persuasion fond
And sealed in silence still.

O bid the ugly frown 'good-bye!'
And sweetly smile instead;
Be like a sunbeam from the sky,
And radiance round you shed.

And if you would be really good,
Unselfish, pure, and true,
'Do unto others as you would
That they should do to you.'

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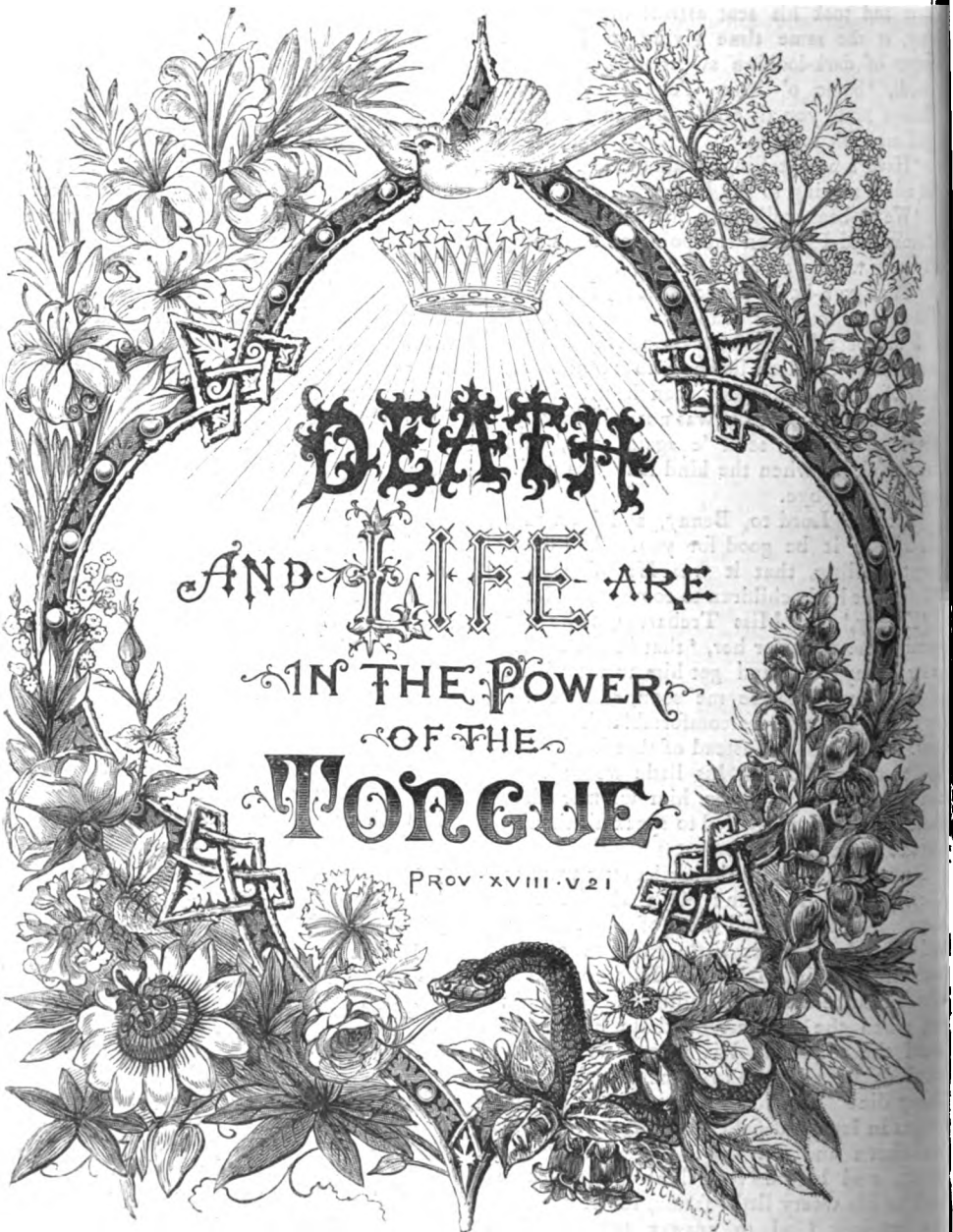

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JULY, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

Mules Drinking.

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See page 98.

THE THIRSTY MULES.

This drawing is made from a sketch taken at Toulon, in France, where our artist saw some mules in their curious head-dresses, drinking at a fountain on a very hot summer's day. The poor creatures seemed to enjoy the water so much; and it was no wonder they were thirsty and tired, for they had been drawing or carrying heavy loads all the morning. The mule is in many countries a valuable beast of burden; and though, like the donkey, it has a bad character for stupidity and obstinacy, it is really, when kindly treated, wonderfully intelligent. Travellers crossing the Alps find this out: for if a mule is left to himself, he will always choose the best and safest path for his slow and steady feet, needing no directions from his rider; but if they are roughly checked or impatiently hurried, they will sometimes become frightened and stupid, like many little children when they are scolded and teased instead of being patiently trained.

A MINISTER'S STORY.

My first taste of the love of God in Jesus was when I was four years old. My father, who was a Missionary, had come to preach at ——, where my brother and I were placed at school. How very young, you will say, to be away from home! Yes, it was. But when Missionaries are forming new stations, though they are ready to sleep under a rock or in a poor hut themselves, they do not like such risks for their little ones, and so are glad to leave them safely at school in England.

My father had preached on the Sunday from this sweet text, 'God is love;' and on the Monday, before he left, to ride a long way from us, he took my brother and me on his knees while he talked with us about the love of God. Then there came up in my soul a wish to love so good a God.

That wish came over me again, like a breeze from heaven, when I was a little more than eight years old, as I was led to give a last kiss to my dear mother's cold face as she was lying asleep in Jesus. But though a mother may die, I have found that a mother's prayers never die.

I thought of that mother often while I was at school, and once when, like a naughty boy, I had done wrong and was in disgrace, I crept under a desk and with many tears prayed to my mother to help me. I know better than to do so now, for God is our only refuge and strength.

But, alas! it was not until I was fourteen years of age that I gave my heart to the Lord Jesus. I am very sad at this moment, and the tears start to my eyes as I remember that I did not sooner yield to Him Who died for me. I should have been a holier, happier and more useful Minister to-day had I done so.

When in my fifteenth year, I spent a short time in Manchester at the house of some friends of my father. I was on my way to enter upon a difficult situation. As I sat at the dinner-table, it was as though a voice said to me, 'You have left your father's roof, what will you do if I am not your Father?' Asking to be excused from the table, I rushed into my bed-room, and prayed, saying, 'My Father, be Thou the Guide of my youth.'

When I reached my destination, to please my father rather than from a desire to be helped on the way to heaven, I met in Class. I was fast settling into a lukewarm state when I heard a sermon from the text, 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.' That sermon so affected me that I was afraid to hear the same preacher at night, so I went to another chapel. But again the same text was announced. I reached home assured that God had spoken to me. The expectation of a death in the house greatly alarmed me.

I was sitting alone in the parlour the next

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evening, full of sad musings, when an elderly female in plain attire entered. This poor woman earned her living by taking in mangling; but she was rich in faith, and mighty in prayer,—this made her eagerly welcomed as a sick visitor, even in the homes of the rich. She was on such an errand now. Taking me by the hand, she said, 'Dear boy, are you happy in the love of Jesus?' Her manner won my heart, and I told her all I felt. The next Sunday she came to me in an after meeting, and finding me in earnest prayer, she whispered in my ear, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom.' She spoke truly.

The next morning early, while I was reading my Bible, the Holy Spirit suggested to me that salvation was by faith, and might be had now, and these words came to my mind: 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' I was then made very happy. I was in such a hurry to let my father know, that I scribbled a few lines to him in pencil. These pencilled lines I found, carefully treasured among his papers, after his death. More than a quarter of a century I have preached the Gospel, and am still confident that the Gospel is true, and that God is love.

A CHILD'S THOUGHTS ABOUT DEATH.

'O! I know what that Picture is about,' I think I hear some of my young friends say, after looking on the next page. Yes; it is the little girl who used to sit and sew beside her brother and sister's graves, and who believed they were still her brother and sister, because they were only in heaven. Many of you, I dare say, know Wordsworth's beautiful poem by heart, but perhaps our youngest readers have not seen it before. We should like you all to learn these easy verses, because they give you such a bright view of what is often such a dark subject.

I met a little cottage girl,
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

'Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?'
'How many? Seven in all,' she said,
And wondering, looked at me.

'And where are they? I pray you tell.'
She answered, 'Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

'Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.'

'You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be.'

Then did this little maid reply,
'Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree.

'My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

'And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

'The first that died was little Jane,
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain,
And then she went away.

'And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.'

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'How many are you, then?' said I,
'If they two are in heaven?'
Quick was the little maid's reply,
'O, Master! we are seven.'

'But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!'
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, 'Nay, we are seven!'

TIM'S TWO HOMES.

'TELL us a story, please Uncle,' cried two or three little voices at once, as we sat round the fire a few nights ago. 'You know lots and lots, Uncle, of all sorts. Tell us a really exciting one, that will make us afraid to go to bed,' said little Robbie, as his eyes grew larger and larger.

'No, please Uncle, a nice one,' said Carrie,

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who had little need of made-up terrors so near bed-time.

'Tell us something about the little boys and girls at Mr. Stephenson's Home,' Nellie pleaded. She had a collecting-box, and was always glad of new stories to repeat to her friends as she asked them to put in a contribution.

'Well, I can do that,' I said; 'for when I was at Edgworth a few weeks ago, such a bright little fellow was brought to the Home, and I heard him tell his own history.'

'What was his name, Uncle?'

'Well, I think we'll call him Tim, for I'm not quite sure about his name.'

'Was he Tiny Tim that Mr. Horner wrote a book about?' asked Nellie.

'No; but I think he was very nearly as badly off as Mr. Horner's Tim. His father had been dead several years, and his mother was very unkind to him. She was a very wicked woman, and poor Tim had anything but a happy life.'

'What did she do to him?' Robbie asked; 'anything very dreadful?'

'Well, she used to make him go about begging for money that she might get drink.'

'I wouldn't have gone,' Robbie said stoutly, for he is a Band of Hope boy.

'So Tim often thought; but, as I heard him say, "If I didn't want to go, she used to kick me out." Then sometimes she would go out with him; and in order to excite people's pity, she used to borrow some children from the people with whom she lived, and go through the streets with these five or six little ones, telling the folk that she was a poor widow, with all these children to keep.'

'And did she spend all the money she got in drink?'

'Very nearly all, I suppose; for Tim said she used to go, or send him, to the public-house as many as fourteen times a day; and that she used to be drunk every night, "Sundays and all." When she was drunk, she often beat him very cruelly, and sometimes turned him out of doors altogether.'

'What did he do then?' said Carrie.

'Well, Tim was not quite without friends; I think very few poor children are, for God doesn't forget them, and He often puts it into the heart of some one to be kind to those whose parents ill-treat them. Tim had an elder sister, who was in service in the town where he lived, and she was very fond of her little brother, and tried to make up for his mother's neglect. She paid some people living near two shillings a-week to let Tim come to them when his mother turned him out of doors, and to give him food when he could get none anywhere else. Whenever she could she would come to see Tim at the

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house where these people lived, and mend his clothes, and do whatever else she could for him; for his mother seems to have quite neglected him. Tim said, "She never mended my trousers, nor nothing, Sir."'

'What kind of a house did Tim live in, Uncle?'

'A very small one indeed, with only two little rooms in it; and besides Tim and his mother, there was a man and his wife, with, I think, five children, and also a woman they called Mad Kate—all living in the same house.'

'But how did he get to the Home?'

'Well, he was found begging in the streets one day, and brought before the magistrates by a School-board officer.'

'But why did they do that? Tim wasn't to blame,' said Nellie. 'Were the magistrates very cruel to him?'

'No, my dear; very far from it. They were men with kind hearts; and when they heard poor little Tim's story, and found what a miserable life he was leading, some of them even shed tears, and they all said they couldn't think of sending him to a reformatory, and they hoped he might be able to get into the Home. So they let the case stand over till they found out if there was room for him there. The Home was very full, but they managed to find a corner for Tim, you may be sure.'

'How old was he, Uncle?'

'About eight years old, I believe.'

'Was he very ragged and dirty?' asked Carrie.

'No; his face was quite bright and clean. His sister had mended his clothes as neatly as she could, although with different coloured pieces of cloth. Then he had such a tidy jacket that we asked where he got it from. He said one of the gentlemen at the court took two shillings out of his pocket, and asked him what he would do with it if he gave it to him. "Buy a jacket, Sir," said Tim. So the gentleman gave the school-board officer—who was a thoroughly good, kind-hearted man, too—half-a-crown to buy him a second-hand jacket. Then I asked Tim where he got such a nice cap from. "I saved up sixpence, Sir," he said, "and then got my sister to put twopence to it, and bought this cap for eightpence."'

'How did he save up sixpence?' asked Robbie.

'That's what I asked him; and he said that the people in the court-room kept giving him pennies and halfpennies, till he had ever so many.'

'Had he ever been to school, Uncle?'

'He had been in the workhouse for eighteen months, and had learnt to read very well. I gave him the *Early Days* for March, and you would have been amused to see how he enjoyed Mr. Wray's poetry about Curious Edwin. With a little help he could read even the long words; and the pictures, especially the one in which Edwin is opening a watch with a pair of scissors, made him laugh very much; and when he found that Edwin had broken his arm, I'm afraid he didn't feel at all sorry, but thought it a capital joke.'

'Was he very pleased to get to the Home?' asked Nellie.

'Yes, indeed he was. When the magistrates asked him if he would like to go back to his mother, he cried bitterly, and begged them not to let her have him again.'

'Poor little Tim!' said Carrie, as her blue eyes filled with tears, 'I'm so glad our Mamma isn't like that. Jesus must be very pleased with Mr. Stephenson and all the people who look after the poor children.'

Whilst Carrie was speaking, Nellie slipped down from Uncle's knees, fetched her collecting-box, and, like a good little Methodist as she is, insisted on making a collection at once, 'to help to keep Tim and all the other girls and boys,' she said. And now, if all who read this little story will do the same, I think they may very easily get money enough to pay for Tim's food and clothing for several years to come.

A. E.

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VISITORS AND NATIVES AT THE SEA-SIDE.

Most boys and girls are fond of the sea-side. It is very pleasant to stand on the shore when the tide is rising, and watch the waves running up the beach, or breaking into spray against the rocks. And very pleasant it is at low water to dig in the sand, or to hunt for shells and strange sea-creatures. I dare say you sometimes wish it was always summer and always holidays. I wonder if that is what the children in the picture called 'Visitors' are saying. They have been gathering sea-weed, and the little girl's basket is half full. They are quite right to enjoy their play times while they may, but they must remember life is not made up of rest and play. It is well to drink in health from the fresh sea-breezes and to bathe in the strong salt-water; that helps to make vigorous bodies. And it is well to go back to school determined to earn the next holiday by honest, hard work; that helps to make vigorous minds.

Now look at the other Picture. That brother and sister are fisherman's or sailor's children, I am almost sure, for very seldom do other boys wear a woollen Guernsey. They have gone out to look for 'drift-wood;' much of it is the broken timber of forgotten wrecks. It is a roughish night, and blowing half a gale, but such weather suits their errand best, as then the stormy sea carries the largest pieces to the shore. The full moon, now rising, affords light enough for their work. Well-dried drift-wood makes capital fires, and saves coals; and if father is a fisherman, his earnings are never very large, and always irregular. If father is a sailor, he gets more pounds, but he may lose his life at any time, and then if nothing is laid by, what are the mother and the children to do? I fear these 'natives' are often sorely tempted to envy the 'visitors,' and to wish that they had comfortable inland homes and fathers bringing in plenty of money by a less dangerous business than following the sea. And I think if the boy and girl in the first Picture had to go and fish for drift-wood on a stormy night, they would be very thankful for their own lot. But the fisher boy and his sister look contented enough just now. They are doing their duty and helping mother, and that is certain to make them happy. I hope all four children love and serve Him Whose the sea is and Who made it, Whose power set bounds to it by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass over. The sea, turbulent as it seems, is never disobedient to God's will, and He will teach our unruly hearts to be obedient, if we only ask Him.

HALF-HOURS IN THE NURSERY.

BY THE REV. J. COLWELL.

III.—DOCTOR BUNNIE'S COUSINS.

You will be anxious to hear how Tom, Blue-eyed Curlyhead, and the rest of them got on with Uncle John and Doctor Bunnie's cousins. I think I told you Uncle John lived in the country. His home was not very far from the Cotteswold Hills, and close to the river Severn, both of which you have often seen on the map. And as our little folks lived in a large city one hundred and fifty miles away, of course they had to go a long journey by rail. I will not stop to tell you all about that. However, despite the length of the way and the kicking of the baby—who did not like it a bit—they got to the end of the journey at last, and found Uncle John's man, Roundhat, waiting with the spring cart to take them to his master's farm.

'What a poor old horse this is,' said Tom, putting his head on one side and looking at him very knowingly.

'Ees,' said Roundhat, ''e be. Master only kips him to do odd jobs, and I brought him wi' me now because he's so quiet.'

And now away they started; and as they had never been in the country before, you may imagine that Tom spoke for all the rest, and told the truth too, when he said that they 'enjoyed it above a bit.'

The next morning, Uncle John took them

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Visitors.

See page 103.

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Natives.

See page 103.

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out into that part of his farm which lay on the slopes of Hartpre Hill, the top of which was covered with a beautiful wood. Almost directly they got there they saw Doctor Bunnie's cousins running about in scores, and while they watched their gambols, their Uncle gave them the promised lesson.

'Now,' said he, 'though the conies have many enemies, and cannot defend themselves against them, yet they are not so badly off as you might suppose them to be, for God has provided them a safe retreat in the rocks. So it is with little children. The Rock Christ Jesus is a safe and blessed retreat which their Heavenly Father has provided for them which they may use in all times of danger and of need.

'Now I will tell you something about the conies, which are the cousins of Doctor Bunnie, though they are unlike him in this respect,—the rabbit burrows in the ground, the conies make their homes in the rock.

'Other animals are not like the conies in this respect; they have many things to trust in, and yet they often fail. The hare is much swifter than the coney, and much more cunning too. Sometimes it trusts its swiftness, and sometimes it tries to save itself by cunning. Sometimes it will "squat," or drop suddenly down, that the dogs may overrun it. Sometimes it will "wind," or run in a kind of circle, so that the dogs may be sooner tired of following it. And sometimes it will continue to leap for several feet at a time, so that the dogs may lose the scent and not be able to follow it. But despite both cunning and swiftness, poor pussy is generally caught at last.

'Then, again, the fox is clever, and he often trusts to his cleverness. Old Æsop, the fable-maker, tells us that once upon a time a fox and a cat were talking to each other. The fox said, "I am very sorry for you; if the dogs were after you, I suppose all you could do would be to run up a tree, and if that failed you could do no more?"

'"Just so, that is it," said pussy.

'"Why," said the fox, "I have a thousand tricks I could use if the dogs were after *me*, and if the times were not so hard I would tell you some of them."

'"Then," replied pussy, "you'll have to begin to use them, for I can hear the huntsman's horn." And at once she ran up the nearest tree and was safe, while poor Reynard, despite his thousand tricks, was caught and torn into pieces.

'The conies are in the same condition as pussy was, they have but one thing to do, but if they do that they are safe.'

'That's best, too,' said Tom; 'I'd rather have one pocket without any holes, than five hundred with.'

'Yes,' replied Uncle John, 'you are quite right. And I would rather have one Saviour that really could save me, than a thousand that could only talk about it.'

'You do not remember dear grandma,—that's my mother,—she went to heaven before you were born. But she was the best woman that ever lived, I think.'

'So mother says,' said Tom; 'but *I* say she wasn't as good as mother is.'

'Quite right for you to think so,' replied Uncle John. 'But she used to beg me to come to Jesus at once, while I was young, and not to wait until I had found out by bitter sorrow that I could not do without Him. But I would not listen. So I tried pleasure for ever so long, was wretched, and weary of life. Then I signed the temperance pledge, and gave up my bad companions, and that was better. Then I went to chapel, and read good books, and at last began to pray, which was better still. But all would not do, I wanted something else. If I got away from the enemies that were outside, I could not get away from those that were inside—in my own heart. At last the good Lord showed me that I should not be safe until I had come right into the Rock Christ Jesus. And I went in, and ever since I have been safe, and at least trying to be good. But how foolish I was, I have often thought since, not to take my mother's advice, and join God's people while I was young. My dear little nephews and nieces, take my advice, and run into the arms of Jesus *at once*.'

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ELSIE'S GARDEN.

BY RUTH ELLIOTT.

(*Concluded from page* 87.)

'WHAT makes you so quiet?' asked her mother, as Elsie stood at the door looking down the road the next evening.

'I wonder if that boy will come again? Here's Dan coming! Why, Dan, where are you going?' she said, as Dan stopped his cart at the gate.

'Would you like a ride 'long with me, Elsie? I'm going down town for some new shrubs, and you may come and see Mr. Norton's flowers, if you like.'

Like! Elsie did like. A ride with Dan was one of her greatest treats, especially when he went to the florist's; and she was allowed to walk through the greenhouses, with their wealth of lovely flowers. It was enchanted ground, and she almost feared to breathe, lest it should all disappear like the fairy palace she had read of.

Mr. Norton did not like children, but he did like Dan, and made no objection when he lifted Elsie out of the cart, and took her into the greenhouse.

'Mind you don't touch anything,' he said, and Elsie promised. She was content to look.

Presently she heard a voice shout, 'Halloa! what do you want?'

At first she was frightened, thinking some one was coming to turn her out. Dan had gone off with Mr. Norton. But peeping out of the glass door she saw the primrose-boy standing so close to her that it made her start; and a man was coming down one of the paths.

'What do you want?' he said; and the boy answered, rather sharply, Elsie thought, 'I want a pot of musk.'

The man opened the greenhouse door, and came in so quickly that he nearly ran over Elsie.

'Bless the child! why don't you get out of the way!' he said, angrily; and Elsie shrank back frightened. 'Come now, off with you, and don't let me see you here again,' he went on, pointing to the door; 'how dare you come in here!'

'I came with Dan, and he left me here. I am to wait for him,' she said, as bravely as she could.

'Then wait outside.'

'Leave her alone!' said the boy, more sharply than before. 'It's Mr. Norton's business to turn her out, not yours. It is your business to sell me my pot of musk, and if you don't be sharp about it, I'll call Mr. Norton.'

He looked so determined that, glancing down the garden, and seeing Mr. Norton and Dan not far off, the man led the way up to the greenhouse. The boy followed, saying to Elsie, 'Come along, he shan't hurt you.'

There were pots of musk of all sizes; but without looking at the big ones, he turned resolutely to a shelf of smaller pots, and chose a fourpenny one.

'Is it for Nanny?' asked Elsie, with interest.

'Yes; it'll be the nicest thing I've taken her for a long time.'

'Is Nanny bigger than I am?' she asked.

'Not much, but she's older, I guess. How old are you?'

'Eleven.'

'Nanny's thirteen. How are the pinks?'

'Quite well, thank you—I mean—'; and then Elsie stopped, and blushed and laughed; and the boy laughed too.

'They are all right,' she said, feeling quite friendly after the laugh. 'Do you live far from here?'

'Not ten minutes off. Would you like to come and see me give Nanny this musk?'

'Yes, I should. I'll go and ask Dan. Will you wait for me?'

Dan was busy among the shrubs; but he listened and nodded. 'Be back in half an hour, Elsie; I shan't be longer.'

So off she went with her new friend. They went down some close, narrow lanes, stopped at a dingy house, and went up some stairs.

The boy went first, and opened a door.

'Nanny, here's some one come to see you.'

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A little girl, with a sweet pale face, was lying on a sort of couch close to the open window. She looked up with a bright smile, and then exclaimed rapturously,

'Musk! musk! O, Tom!'

He put the pot in her little thin hands, and she buried her face among the sweet leaves and yellow blossoms. When she lifted up her head, Elsie saw two bright drops on the musk.

'Are you pleased?' asked Tom, smiling all over his face.

'Pleased! O, my dear boy!' said Nanny fondly, putting one arm round his neck as he bent over her. 'It is so lovely!'

'Well, don't cry! salt water always kills flowers,' said the big boy jokingly, with a funny look about his own brown eyes.

'Here's a little girl come to see you; the one I told you about.'

Poor Elsie felt that troublesome conscience of hers pricking her harder than ever.

'I wouldn't give your brother any of my flowers,' she said remorsefully; 'I am so sorry! Didn't he tell you?'

'Not that you wouldn't give him any flowers; he only told me about your garden. Never mind,' said Nanny, gently. 'Tom wasn't cross, were you, Tom?'

'O, wasn't I though!' said Tom, merrily. 'You should have seen how angry I looked.'

'You didn't one bit,' said Elsie. 'I'm so glad I saw you to-day. I'll always give you flowers for Nanny.'

'How good you are,' said Nanny, so gratefully that Elsie was obliged to give her a kiss, and from that minute they were friends.

'I'll come and see you again as soon as I can,' she said, as she wished Nanny good-bye. 'And I'll always have posies for you. When will Tom come to our house again?'

'Saturday,' said Tom. 'I am at work again now, and can't come till then.'

'Why didn't you tell Nanny that I wouldn't give you some flowers?' said Elsie, just as he was wishing her good-bye at Mr. Norton's gate.

'I never tell Nanny anything to vex her.'

'I think you're very good,' said Elsie; but he only shook his head and laughed as he ran away. 'He is,' she said to herself, 'really good, I think. He shall have all my flowers!'

He did have a great many, and Nanny's little room was sweet with their perfume all the summer.

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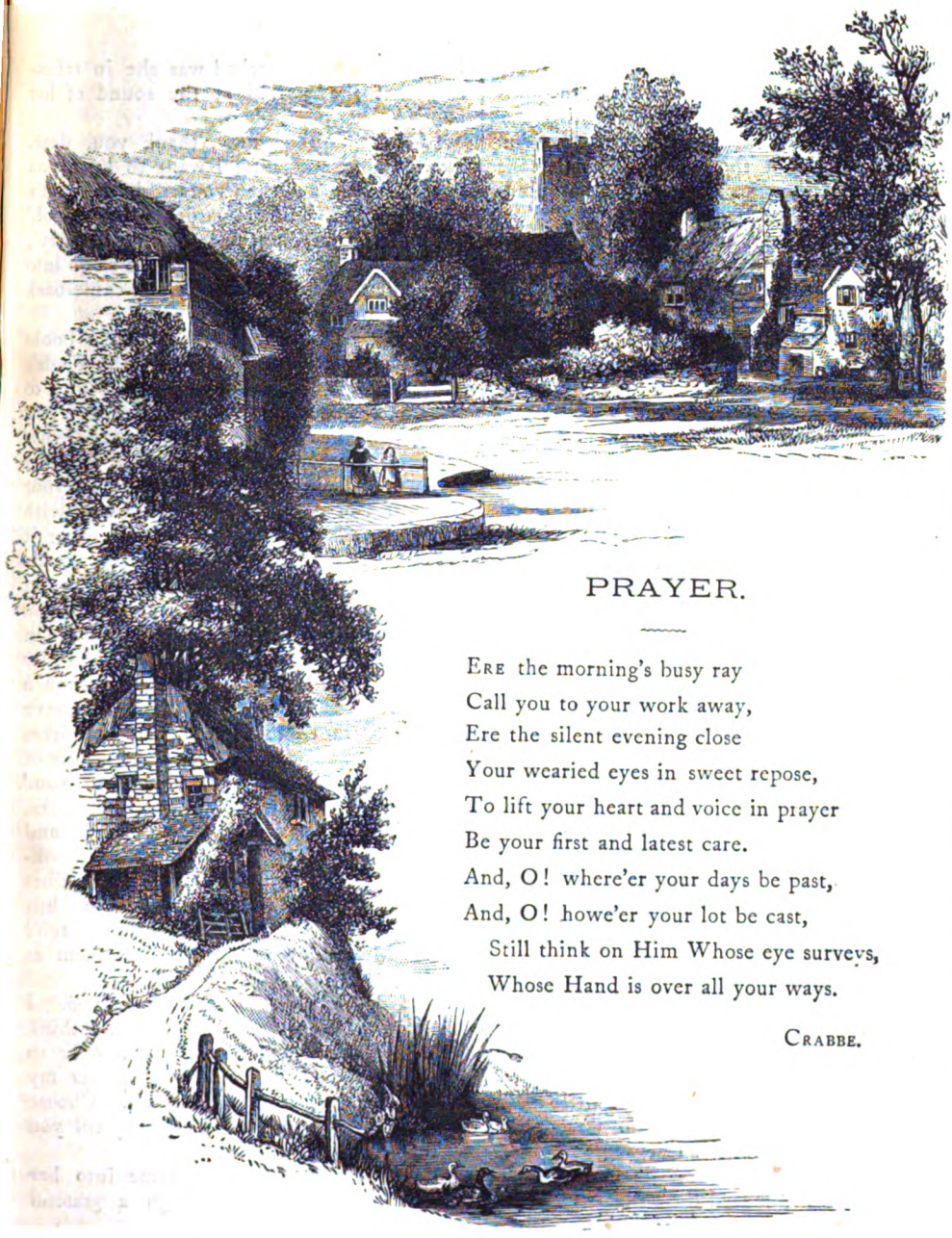

PRAYER.

ERE the morning's busy ray
Call you to your work away,
Ere the silent evening close
Your wearied eyes in sweet repose,
To lift your heart and voice in prayer
Be your first and latest care.
And, O! where'er your days be past,
And, O! howe'er your lot be cast,
Still think on Him Whose eye surveys,
Whose Hand is over all your ways.

CRABBE.

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THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER VII.—AUNT LUCY'S PRESENT.

FOR some time Aunt Lucy had felt there was something wrong between the children, but she preferred waiting for them to confess. She soon decided that Fleda felt it the most, for her lessons seemed a burden to her preoccupied mind, and generally she was fond of her books.

Miss Hatherleigh would have questioned the child, but she did not want to make her tell tales of the others.

As they left the dinner-table one afternoon, Miss Hatherleigh took Fleda's hand, saying, 'Come into my room, dear; I want you to help me to plait.'

Generally, if Miss Hatherleigh called one of the children to help her at anything, she told them a story, or chatted, to pass away the time pleasantly. To-day she worked silently, and Fleda did not feel in the mood to talk. She soon got tired of watching her Aunt's fingers at the other end of the yard of plait, so her eyes wandered round the room for something interesting. After an elaborate calculation of the number of grapes on the wall-paper, they fell on her aunt's 'Silent Comforter,' and rested there. It was open at 1 Peter ii. 19—25, and Fleda read: 'For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps, etc.'

Slowly, thoughtfully, Fleda read on to the end, and Aunt Lucy, who had turned to that page just before dinner, ready for her to see, felt satisfied with her plan. She was inclined to explain the passage, and talk about it to Fleda, but a glance at the earnest little face convinced her that the Scripture was doing its own work without her teaching.

'O dear! I am not a bit like Christ, and I never shall be,' mused the child. 'I always revile again if others are cross, and this time I began it.' So absorbed was she in reflection that she started at the sound of her aunt's voice:

'I have finished now, thank you, dear. There is just one thing I want to keep you a moment for, and then you will have about a quarter of an hour in the garden before school.'

'Thank you, Auntie, I am in no hurry; I would just as soon stay with you as go into the garden.' And the dreary look came back into the little blue eyes.

Miss Hatherleigh took three little books from her drawer, and put them into Fleda's hand, saying, 'I have long wished you to carry a Testament in your pocket, my pet. You can read so nicely, and understand what you read very well indeed, for your age. I believe it would help you to correct your faults if you had God's Word always with you, and took a good many little peeps at it during the day, when you happen to be alone. I should have given you a Testament on your last birthday, only I was afraid you would tear all your frocks with the weight in your pocket. You have been a much tidier little girl lately, and have not carried such a lot of rubbish. Besides, you see, I have found one in three volumes. If you like, you can keep two safely here in the corner of my book-case, and carry one about with you.'

I suppose most children like tiny books, and these were bound in dark morocco and gilt, and each had a China ribbon book-mark, so that it really cost Fleda an effort to say, 'Thank you, dear Auntie, but wouldn't you rather give us one volume each? I think Mary and Louie would like them as much as I.'

'No, dear; I bought them all for you. I will give the others something when I think fit. It was very generous of you to offer to give them up, but it would not answer my purpose unless you have them all. Choose one, and I will put the others by till you want to change.'

Fleda slipped the last volume into her pocket, gave Miss Hatherleigh a grateful kiss, and ran away.

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WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

IV.—THE LAME BEGGAR.

'AUNTIE, I shouldn't like to be always lame,' said Willie one Sunday evening. The poor little fellow had been laid up for weeks with a sprained ankle.

'No,' returned Aunt Kate, 'you find it hard work to be still for four weeks. I wonder how you would feel if you had been lame for more than forty years, like the man we are going to talk about this evening. This poor man had never walked; and we can fancy how, when he was a boy, and saw his brothers and sisters running about, he would wonder why he could not run and play too; but when he grew up it was much worse, for how could a helpless cripple earn his living? He was obliged to depend on the little money he could get by begging, until one day he received a wonderful gift which he never expected. Katie shall read the story. It is in the third chapter of the Acts.'

Katie read the first eight verses, and then Pollie asked, 'What did the temple-gate look like?'

'The temple had many gates. Some led into the outer court, which was not considered a part of the real temple; and here people would often come to buy or to sell; but the gate to the inner court, where the worshippers stood, was made entirely of bright Corinthian brass, which Josephus says was "more precious than gold;" and I think it would be by this gate that the poor cripple was laid.'

'I suppose,' suggested Willie, 'he thought the people would feel good, and wouldn't say "No!" when they were going to the temple.'

'Very likely he did; and I dare say, too, he knew that those people who gave alms to be seen of men, would like everybody to see how much they gave to the poor.'

'You mean the Pharisees, Auntie,' said Katie.

'Wouldn't he be vexed at first,' said Pollie, 'when Peter said he had no money; he'd think he was making fun when he said, "Look on us."'

'Yes, there are many things better than silver and gold, but you often hear people say, "Silver and gold have I none," who are not at all willing to do what they can.'

'But nobody now can make a lame man walk, or do anything half so nice as that,' said Willie, positively.

'We can all do something to lessen the amount of misery in the world, if we try; and Willie, there is a gift which is as much greater than feet to the lame, as they are than silver and gold; I mean,' she added, noticing the astonished look on the children's faces, 'that if we persuade people to come to Jesus to have their souls cured, it is far better than healing their bodies. In one sense we are all born lame; for by nature we can none of us walk in the narrow way; we all go crookedly somehow till God turns our feet unto His testimonies; and like the lame man, the older we get the more unlikely it is that we shall ever be cured. Some kinds of lameness can be cured in little babies, but for a man over forty years old to be healed, was a most unheard-of thing. I shall never forget a powerful sermon I once heard from the words: "The man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was showed." The preacher told us how comparatively few people were converted when they were more than forty years old; how by far the greater number of the best Christians were brought to Jesus while they were young.'

'Why, Auntie,' interrupted Katie, 'I thought people were almost obliged to grow up before they could be properly converted.'

'My dear child, whatever could have led you to such a strange mistake as that. The most "proper" conversion of all is to receive the kingdom of God as a little child in years as well as in spirit. You would like to come now best, wouldn't you, Katie?'

'Yes, Auntie, I think so,' she said, in a low voice.

And then Aunt Kate prayed: 'O Lord Jesus, we do not want to have our souls sick and lame and blind for years and years: we want to come to Thee at once, and be made strong for Thy service all our lives; and O help us to do all we can, however little it may be, to lead others to accept Thy great gift of healing; for Thy name's sake. Amen.'

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The Lame Man leaping for joy.

See page 111.

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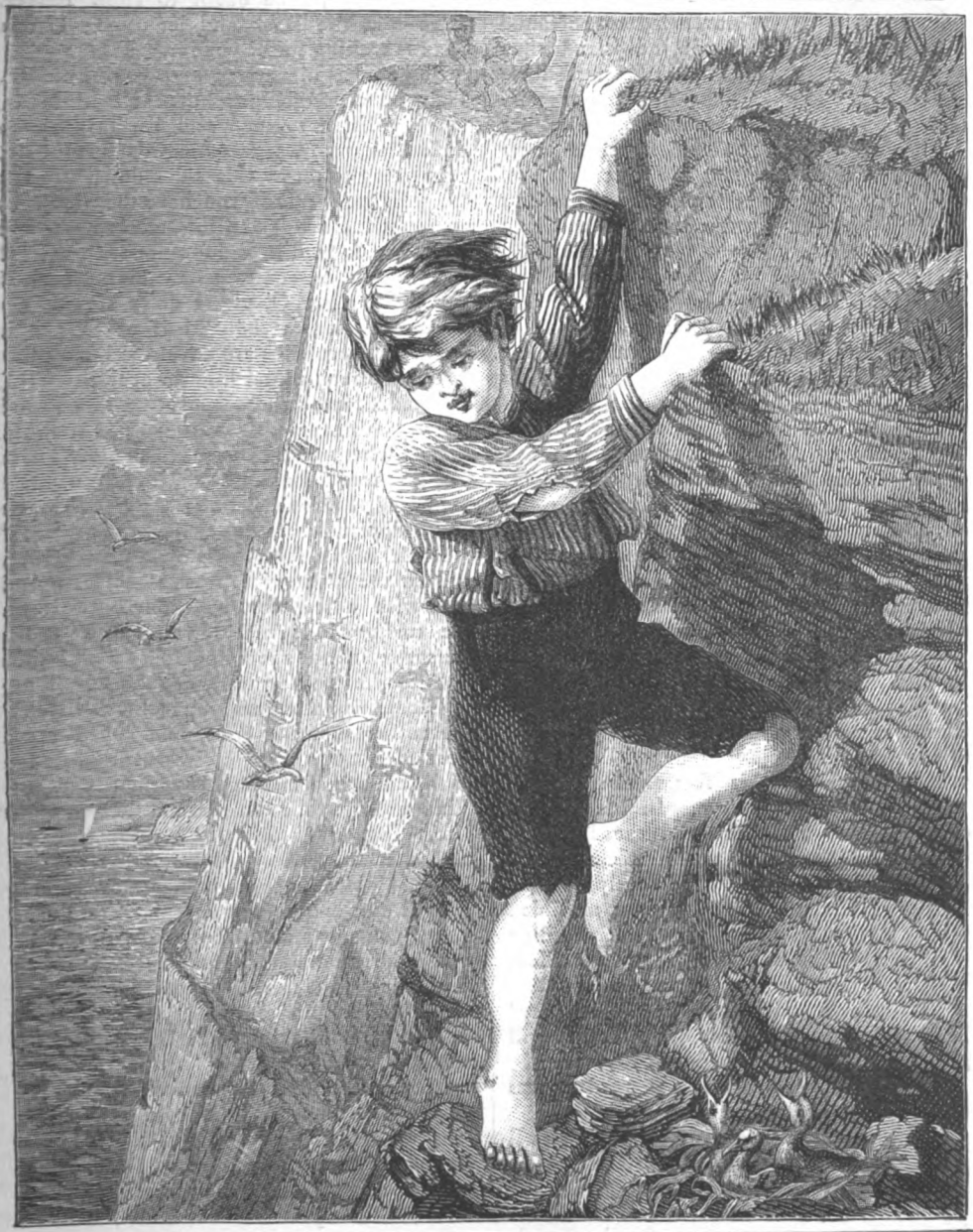
AUGUST, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS



Max descending the Rock.

See page 114.

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GRANDFER PAYNTER'S LITTLE MAX.

THERE was not a kinder or braver lad to be found in all the island than Grandfer Paynter's little Max. He was not really his grandson, but neither he nor the child knew who his parents were. They had cared for him ever since he was a tiny baby. They had taught him everything he knew; and best of all, they had taught him to love the Saviour, and to love His Word.

Early one evening in June, little Max set out for the headland, where he sat down on the verge of one of the highest cliffs. The Book of God lay open on his knees, and he read aloud, slowly and distinctly, the twenty-fourth Psalm. When he had read the ninth verse, he paused, and raising his head, looked out on the ocean. The sun was in the west, and as he began to descend, he filled the sea and sky with gold and crimson light.

'Yon gowlden gates are the everlasting doors that are to be lifted up for the King o' Glory to come in,' said Max, dreamily; 'and when will He come? and Who is the King of Glory?'

'Not you, evidently,' said a voice near him; 'rather, I should say, the king of rags and tatters.'

Max sprang to his feet, and saw two youths standing near him. In his surprise and consternation he dropped the Bible on the turf. The speaker quickly picked it up.

'A Bible,' said he, incredulously, turning it about in his hand. 'Surely not a Bible! Yes it is, though. You haven't been reading it, have you?' he said, fixing his eyes on Max.

'Yes, I have,' he replied simply.

'What have you been reading it for, pray? because you *must*, for fear your mother will give you a licking if you don't?'

'I read it because I like to read it,' was the brave answer.

'Nonsense! Little boys shouldn't tell crams; it's as bad as reading the Bible.'

'Don't tease the laddie, Claud,' said the younger boy; 'you ought to know better. Give him the Book, and let us go; Uncle Max is waiting for us yonder.'

'Then let him wait; and you shut up, Jamie; I'm not going to hurt the lad. Now, my boy, listen to me,' said he, turning to little Max, who was watching him anxiously. 'I'm going to throw this Book down among the gulls' nests; so if you have the pluck to go down and fish it out, I'll believe that you really *love* to read it, and are not telling lies.'

'I don't want you to believe me,' returned the child; 'but O, please don't throw my Bible over, for maybe I shall never get it again, for them cliffs are awful to climb!'

Claud stretched out his arm over the cliff, and said, 'Here it goes—one, two, three, and a—way. There, it's gone! that's your fault, Jamie; whatever did you clutch a fellow's arm like that for? I didn't mean it to go over.'

'Claud, I am ashamed of you!' said the boy, indignantly. 'Look at the laddie's face!'

Little Max's face had grown quite white, and for the moment he was speechless; and then with a low cry, he threw himself on the turf, and looked down at the rocks beneath; then stretching out his hands towards the glowing west, he said, 'O, King of Glory, help me to find my mother's Bible!'

Another moment, ere Jamie could say a word of remonstrance, he was over the edge of the cliffs, and making his perilous descent. The two boys followed him a little way, and Jamie begged of him to return, but he heeded him not.

Claud MacPherson being now deeply grieved for his thoughtless but cruel act, started off in search of his Uncle Max, whom he knew to be an expert climber. A few hurried words of explanation sufficed, and Claud was sent on to the nearest cottage for a rope, while his uncle hastened to the headland.

Meanwhile, Max was descending quickly; sometimes springing from crag to crag, or jumping over chasms, or feeling with his feet around a ledge that was scarcely wide enough for one small foot. He was far too excited

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to realize that the sharp crags were cutting his little naked feet and hands; neither did he know that the young sea-gulls were hissing at him as he passed by their nests. Having at length reached the last narrow platform of rock, he stopped and looked about him. He knew the Bible must have fallen somewhere near where he was standing, but he could not see it; and then a great fear filled his heart that it must have fallen into the sea; but on catching sight of something dark to his right a little way up the cliff, he cried joyfully, 'I see it up there in that cleft of rock by the gulls' nest!' In a moment the brave little Max had found his lost treasure, and was hugging it to his heart.

As he began to climb upwards, and saw how terribly steep the cliffs were, his heart almost failed him. 'But I must go on,' thought he, 'or grandfer and granny 'll be dreadfully frightened.' And he went bravely on. About midway up the Head he felt giddy, and sat down on a rock to rest.

'Stay where you are, my little friend; I'm coming to help you!' said a voice not far off. In the course of a few minutes the stranger's arms were placed around him, and he said: 'Let me put this rope under your arms; we are going to pull you up. But first give me your Bible to take care of it for you.' But Max held it fast. 'Don't fear to trust me with it, my child; God's Word is dear to me too.' The boy looked into the gentleman's face, and then he let him take it. 'Pull up!' he shouted, and Max was drawn carefully up. Grandfer was waiting to receive him—it so happened that his was the first cottage, and thither Claud had gone.

When Mr. MacPherson had gained the top of the cliff, he returned Max his Bible, with the words, 'I honour you more than I can say, my bonnie lad, and I shall never forget you. You may well be proud of your little grandson, old man,' he said, speaking to Grandfer.

'I be indeed proud o' im, and he is my very heart's delight,' returned the old man; 'but he's no grandcheeld o' mine. I found 'un eleven years agone last March, upon the breast of a sweet young crayter who was lying dead 'pon the sands; and we caal 'un Max, arter the name in the fly-leaf o' that Bible, which was tied round her neck.'

The gentleman looked strangely at little Max, and he said, 'May I look at the Bible for a moment, laddie?'

'What can be the matter with Uncle Max?' whispered Jamie.

Mr. MacPherson remained motionless for some minutes, gazing at the fly-leaf of the Book in his hand, on which was written, 'To dear Maggie, from Max;' and underneath, 'I know Whom I have believed;' and then, in a voice trembling with intense feeling, he said, 'This precious Bible belonged to my dear wife; I gave it to her before we were married. When our wee bairn was eleven months old, she sailed with him from Scotland in the steamer *Irene*, and that steamer was never heard of after. Now, I feel convinced from what you tell me and from what this Bible tells me, that this child is no other than my Maggie's bairn and my own little son Max!' And the wondering, dark-eyed, fair-haired little Max was clasped to his father's breast.

''Tes wonderful! 'tes wonderful!' cried Grandfer, lifting up his hands; and his old quivering voice broke forth into words of praise and thanksgiving: '"Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever."' And the cliffs and the waves seemed to take up the strain, 'For His mercy endureth for ever.'

NELLIE CORNWALL.

A DOG WITH A WILL.

Poor Doggie! his master could not take him with him when he left his native land, perhaps never to return. So the faithful animal was tied up, and given in charge to a friend, who had promised to be kind to him. But the dog was too sharp for his keeper, and managed to break loose from his kennel, and to find his way down to the docks; yes, right down to the water's edge, just as the vessel was starting. See, he knows his master is on board, and is fast gliding out of his reach, and he is now alone

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Forsaken.

See page 115.

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and forsaken! Yes, he looks forsaken all over, does he not? even down to the tip of his tail! Ah well, good doggie, you have lost a good, kind master, but we hope you may find another.

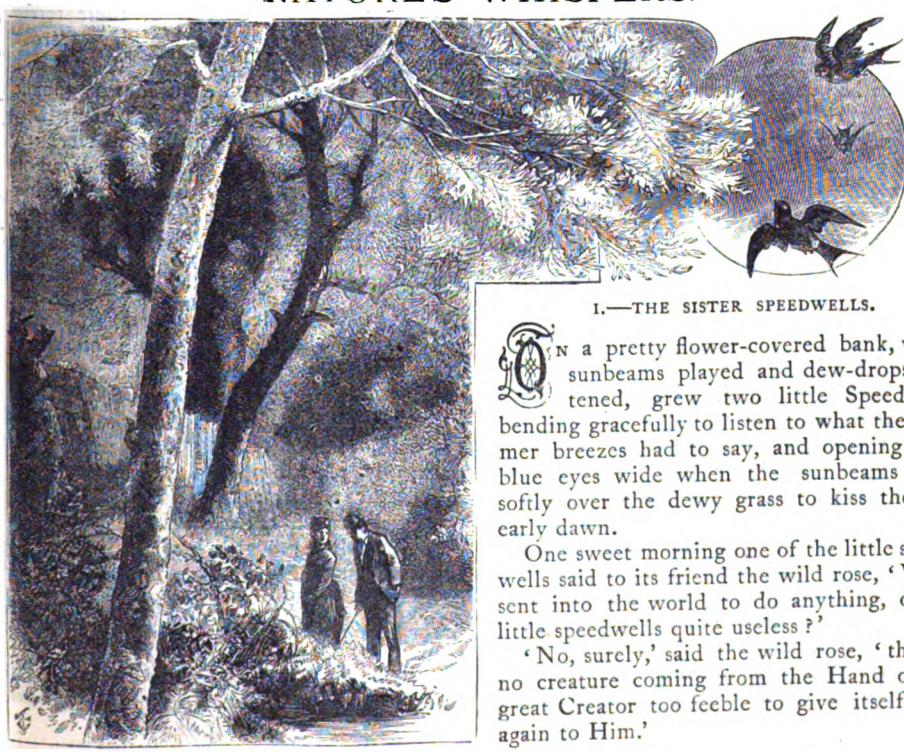
I once heard of a dog, who lived many years ago, before there were railways, in Ireland. He was called Carlow, because he was born in that county. His master was gone from home, on a journey of sixty miles. The day before he left, he gave the groom and coachman orders to have the carriage ready at an early hour next morning. 'And be sure,' he added, 'to tie Carlow up securely, for he might think it his duty to follow the carriage to Dublin.' Accordingly poor Carlow was fastened up in the stable, and sorrowfully saw his companions, the horses, led out without him. The groom, however, gave him his breakfast; and in the afternoon went to the stable to let him out for a run. But there was no Carlow! He called and whistled for him, and searched, and enquired of all the servants, but all in vain—no Carlow!

Mr. and Mrs. B— made their journey in one day by posting, and stopped at an hotel. Being fatigued, they went to bed early. Mr. B— rose betimes in the morning. What was his astonishment when he opened his bedroom door to see his faithful Carlow, who was lying full length across the mat, resting after his sixty miles' run!

By that wonderful endowment called scent, of which we know so little, he had found the right road, house and door; and you may be sure, though his master did not wish to take him, he did not send him back. No; Carlow became a greater favourite than ever.

R. R. T.

NATURE'S WHISPERS.



I.—THE SISTER SPEEDWELLS.

On a pretty flower-covered bank, where sunbeams played and dew-drops glistened, grew two little Speedwells, bending gracefully to listen to what the summer breezes had to say, and opening their blue eyes wide when the sunbeams crept softly over the dewy grass to kiss them at early dawn.

One sweet morning one of the little speedwells said to its friend the wild rose, 'Was I sent into the world to do anything, or are little speedwells quite useless?'

'No, surely,' said the wild rose, 'there is no creature coming from the Hand of our great Creator too feeble to give itself back again to Him.'

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'Then a little flower ought not to be idle?'

'No, indeed,' said the rose again, 'since a little spot remains empty until you rise and fill it.'

'Sister,' said the speedwell, 'you must not be idle; we have a great work to do, and we must rouse ourselves and do it.'

'Ah,' said her little sister, quite meekly, 'then *you* must do the great work; I try to be thankful for the sweet sunbeams; but when the clouds hide the light or the light of the sun dries me up, I try to think it is the will of our Great Creator. I think that is all a little speedwell can do to serve Him.'

'You are a selfish thing,' said the other, pettishly; and she drew herself up proudly, with a feeling of great contempt for her sister.

'But what must I do?' The speedwell looked about her, but saw nothing to her mind. Just then, a sunbeam crept round the edge of a rain-cloud and fell laughing on the bank.

'You are very pretty,' said the speedwell, as it bathed its slender form in beautiful, golden light, 'but are you of any use?'

'Use!' replied the sunbeam, 'why, without us no flower could grow, no fruit ripen; we are a blessing and a joy to everything, a bit of heaven let loose upon earth.'

'Alas!' said the speedwell, 'would that I were a sunbeam, with a message of life to all, but I am only a way-side blossom; my life will not enrich the world, nor my death impoverish it.' The little blue-eyed flower drooped her head upon the broad leaves, and knew nothing and felt nothing until, some time afterwards, she was aroused by a soft, gentle touch, and looking up, she saw raindrops all around her, and heard their patter on the leaves. Right gladly she raised herself, and stretched out every bud for a cool drop; but as she grew more refreshed, she thought again of the sunbeam, and she asked, 'Who sent you from that big cloud up there, and why do you come?' A chorus of happy musical voices answered, 'The Great God Who made you and all things, has sent us to refresh and cheer all the world.'

Many days passed away, the flowers on the bank were very happy, smiling at the sunbeams and nodding welcome to the breezes. The speedwell alone never raised her head, but faded and withered more and more, though the winds sighed round her and the clouds dropped big tears as they sailed above. The little flower never looked up or seemed to care for anything, while her sister grew more beautiful than ever.

One day, as the flowers were enjoying the sunbeams, they were surprised to see a young lady and gentleman coming across the field towards them; this was an unusual sight in the retired spot in which they grew, and filled them with alarm.

'They will pick my beautiful buds,' cried the wild rose; 'and tear off my branches,' said the honeysuckle.' 'They will put us in books and press us quite flat—a butterfly told me *that* is what people do to flowers,' said the rock rose. But now every voice was hushed, for the objects of their terror had come up to the bank. They were a young brother and sister, and though the bright sunshine and pleasant country sounds seemed to speak only of gladness, their faces were sad, and the young girl's eyes were red with weeping. With a sigh she sat down on a mossy seat, and glanced wearily about her till she saw the speedwell that had grown so lovely, while her sister had withered at her side.

'Look, Willie,' she said, 'God has sent us here to learn a lesson of faith from this little flower. See how it blossoms on, gratefully receiving every stray sunbeam, and trusting the morrow with Him Who rules to-day. Will He, Who clothes the grass of the field, forsake us, His children?' And reverently plucking the little blossom, she turned away. In a moment the drooping speedwell raised herself. 'Rose,' she said, 'can you tell me how it is that I, who have had no greater desire than to be useful—who have done nothing all these bright spring days but search for some little place in which I might serve our Creator—whose only grief has been that I must stand by useless while others refresh and gladden the earth,—how

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is it that *I* have had but to look on, while my sister—my selfish sister, who never cared to think of the work that all things were doing while she was idle—has stepped in and done the great work—a work worth dying for?' And the rose answered in a low, sweet voice, 'Because your sister was content to do her own work. You mourned because you could not do the work of others.' 'I have been seeking for my place. Ah, rose, tell me where it is!' 'On this bank, little flower; here, where God has placed you, not to droop and wither because the mission of the sun or of the rain is not given to you, but to be what He meant you to be, a little bright, happy speedwell. If all the rain-drops ceased to fall because they are not sunbeams, if all the grass should wither because it is not corn, and we flowers fade because we are not rain, what would become of the earth?'

And the breeze, which, during this conversation, had been hanging fondly about the bank, loading itself with the perfume of the flowers, moved gently away, quietly singing to itself some words it had heard a little girl read to her grandfather the evening before: 'If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him.'

EDITH EDWARDS.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

V.—SAUL AND ANANIAS—STONING OF STEPHEN.

'CAN any of you tell me what this Picture represents?' asked Aunt Kate, as she opened the scrap-book one wet Sunday evening.

'Is it one of the Apostles curing somebody?' asked Willie.

'The standing figure is not one of the twelve Apostles, it is a disciple named Ananias.'

'Is it the one who was struck dead for telling a story?' asked Pollie.

'Why, he didn't cure any one,' said Katie. 'Isn't it the Ananias who laid his hands on Paul when he was blind? but he was called Saul of Tarsus then.'

'Katie is right. You remember that when the Lord Jesus appeared to Saul on his way to Damascus, the light that shone around was so bright that Saul was blinded.'

'How long was he blind?' asked Pollie.

'Look in the ninth chapter of Acts and you will see. Read the ninth verse, Willie.'

'"And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." Why didn't he eat or drink, Auntie?'

'I suppose he was too much troubled by what the Lord had said to him, to think about it. Do you remember what His question was?'

'Wasn't it, "Why persecutest thou Me?"' said Katie.

'Yes, as he sat alone, and in darkness, Saul would be thinking over those words.'

'When did Saul persecute Jesus?' asked Willie.

'If you will look in the chapter before this, you will find an account of how Saul "made havoc of the Church;" that is, tried in every way to hurt the followers of Jesus: and the Saviour takes what is done to His people as done to Himself. Then, you know, he had a great deal to do with the death of the first Christian martyr.'

'That was Stephen,' said Willie, looking back to the seventh chapter. 'Yes, it says, "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."'

'Yes, here is a picture of Stephen's death; you see, Saul is taking charge of the clothes of the witnesses; that is, those who had accused Stephen, and therefore by the Law of Moses were to throw the first stones. Saul approves of what they are doing, and is looking on eagerly, until the martyr draws his last breath.'

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Saul and Ananias.

'That was just as bad as if he had thrown the stones himself,' said Willie. Then looking back to the picture of Saul in his blindness, he added, 'It must have been dreadful to have heard Jesus say that he had persecuted *Him*. I do think that was worse than all the other things he had done. Didn't he feel as if God would never forgive him?'

'But Stephen had asked God to forgive all who had to do with stoning him,' remarked Katie; 'that would give Saul some hope.'

'Yes, but Stephen's prayer would not have saved him unless he had gone to God for himself. Our friends may ask God to forgive us, and the Lord Jesus Himself may pray for us, but after all we are never safe until from the depths of our own heart we have cried to God for pardon and help. That is what Saul did, for in the eleventh verse of our chapter the Lord says of him, "Behold, he prayeth." Let us see how his prayer was answered. Read from the tenth verse, Willie.'

'"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth. . . . Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy Name."

'It must have been hard to believe any good of him,' said Willie; 'and Ananias must have known that if Saul had not been struck blind, he would have bound *him*.'

'Yes, but as soon as Ananias knew that God had chosen Saul for His special servant, every feeling of distrust was gone. If his Master could forgive Saul so could he.'

'Yes, he called him "Brother Saul," said Pollie, looking at the seventeenth verse.

'What does "filled with the Holy Ghost" mean?' asked Willie.

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The Stoning of Stephen.

'Doesn't it mean that God gave him a new heart?' said Katie.

'Yes, just as his bodily eyes were opened to see the daylight, God's light came into his soul, and he saw that he was forgiven; but more even than that, God's love so filled his heart, that there was no room for self to reign there. From that hour he was ready to do or suffer any thing if only he might please his Master. Some evening we will read of how he showed others that Jesus had come into his heart.

'Now, what thoughts shall we carry away from our two pictures?'

'That being unkind to God's children is like being unkind to Him,' said Pollie.

'To try to help those who are beginning to do right,' said Willie, 'even if they have not been kind to us.'

'That if God puts His Spirit into our heart, we need not be like our own wrong selves any more,' said Katie.

'Yes, let us ask Him,' said Aunt Kate. And she prayed: 'O, Lord Jesus, we pray Thee to give us Thy Holy Spirit, and help us so to listen to His voice, that each day we may be more willing to give up our own ways and do Thy will, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.'

HALF-HOURS IN THE NURSERY.

BY THE REV. J. COLWELL.

IV.—DOCTOR BUNNIE'S COUSINS ONCE MORE.

THE following day Uncle John took his nieces and nephew to another part of the meadow, where they could see the rabbits feeding. At one end of it was the little hill in which they made their homes.—'*The next lesson that the rabbits teach us*,' he said, 'IS TO RUN TO JESUS WITH ALL OUR MIGHT THE VERY MOMENT WE ARE IN DANGER, just as the rabbits

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run into their holes, as you will see them run now when I open this gate and slam it against the post, so that they may be frightened by the noise.' Then taking the gate in his hand, he allowed it to go with a bang against the post.

The children were delighted, and clapped their hands with glee.

'Why,' said Tom, 'what chaps they are to run. I always thought Long Jim, at our school, was a good runner, but the rabbits beat him. A minute ago there were scores of 'em, and now there's not one to be seen.'

'And how fast they ran,' said Bessie.

'Yes,' answered Uncle John, 'their hind legs are much longer than their fore paws, so that they can run much better up a hill than upon level ground; and they are so swift in their movements when going up the side of a hill, that the fastest dog could not overtake them.'

'I should have thought they could hardly have heard the noise the gate made,' said Tom; 'it was not very loud, and they were a long way off.'

'That reminds me of something else,' said Uncle John. 'Did you notice their ears? If so, you saw that they were large and long, and almost like a trumpet in shape, so, of course, they can hear very quickly. Then as they generally feed with their faces turned towards "cover," or the hole in which they live, the moment they hear a sound they have only to run off home, where they will be quite safe.'

'Where are they now, I wonder?' said Bessie.

'O, they are in their houses!' replied Uncle John. 'And that may teach us another lesson, that just as the rabbits run *into* their holes—not *near* to them only—just so should we run *to* Jesus, all the way to Jesus, and never pause until we are safe in His loving arms.'

'But many rabbits get caught,' said Tom, 'after all.'

'O, yes!' replied Uncle John; 'but still those who do reach their homes in the rocks are safe.

'We will go and sit on that little mound yonder under the shadow of the hill, and I will tell you a little story of a lad I once knew, who made his shelter in Christ, and was supported by Him in a dreadful trouble.

'He was a scholar in a large Sunday-school. When he was about sixteen years of age, a great number of the scholars were brought to Christ, and George was among them. For about two years he was very happy and useful, and loved his Sunday-school and all good things very much indeed. He was a railway clerk at a station about two miles from his home. One beautiful summer evening he was returning from work, and seeing a goods train passing slowly through the station he attempted to jump on to it. It was a very foolish thing to do, and so poor George soon found, for he missed his footing, and fell down between the rushing wheels of the train and the platform. Of course, he was very badly hurt, so much so that in two days afterwards he died. After the train had passed away, the railway porters picked him up and laid him upon some straw in a "truck" to take him home. His father came and knelt over him, and as he rested his son's head upon his knee and looked down into his face, his heart seemed almost breaking, while his hot tears fell thick and fast upon the face of his boy. "O, my poor George!" he cried. "No," said the sufferer, "not poor George, poor father. George will soon be in heaven? It is father left behind that will be poor; George will be rich." And then as his father continued to weep, George said, "O father, don't! If all you have taught me of Jesus and His love, and heaven and its blessedness, is true—and I feel now that it is—you ought not to give way so. Let us try to sing; help me, father." And with his feeble voice the dying lad raised the hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," and the sobbing father did his best to help him. I knew both father and son very well, and visited the son before he died, and then followed him to the grave. How often I have thought of it since, and how much it has comforted me sometimes I cannot tell you. It teaches just the very lesson I want you to learn, you see. Jesus is strong. Let us go to Jesus and we shall be strong, too. In our greatest trials, He will uphold us as He did poor George.

'But it is getting dark, so we must say Good-bye to Dr. Bunnie's Cousins.'

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THE UNWELCOME BABY, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

CHAPTER V.—STEPS UPWARD.

After some years John's old friend, Mr. Evarts, who knew that the boy had brains and was willing to use them, offered to let him live in his house, so that he might attend a better school than he could in a country town. John very gratefully accepted the offer, though he knew it meant hard work with head and hands, for he was to help in the house as well as to go to school. Of course, he felt very sorry to leave his kind friends, but it seemed to the boy a step upward on the ladder of life. And a step upward it was indeed; for it was the means of leading him to take that blessed step which those who have not taken have not really begun to live at all. I mean that it was while John was living with Mr. Evarts that he came to Jesus, and began to walk in the way of everlasting life. Up to this time, he had lived as many another boy has done—sometimes trying to be good, and now and then feeling that he should like to serve his father's God, Who had promised to be his Father, and sometimes forgetting all about it. He was now fifteen years old; but since the kind clergyman had talked to him beside his father's grave, he had had no one to take an interest in his own personal salvation. Now, you must not think that he had grown up like a young heathen, for he had been taught his catechism and regularly taken to the house of God, but no one had invited him to take the Lord Jesus as his own Saviour; and you know children, yes, and men and women too, are often more easily led by a kind word spoken directly to them, than in any other way.

At length, however, a good man came to spend a few weeks with Mr. Evarts; and one day, when he and John were alone in the room, he asked the lad whether he had ever heard his Saviour's call, and whether he should be afraid to die. To the first question John replied simply, 'No;' but he did not see why he should be particularly afraid of death; for he 'had done nothing of any consequence' against God, and so thought he had as good a chance of heaven as any one. His new friend tried to show him what a sandy foundation this was for his eternal hope; and after a few more earnest, tender words, he dropped the subject, and poor John felt thoroughly miserable.

He now began to read good books and to attend religious meetings, but it seemed as if all was useless. I will not tell you all about his sorrowful seeking, for you need never know such a time of darkness. But light came at last, as he gave himself fully to God and to His Church.

He soon began to long to do something for Jesus, and wrote to his brothers and sisters, begging that they, too, would seek the one thing needful. He now more than ever became anxious to cultivate his talents and to improve his mind, so as 'to make it an instrument of usefulness;' for, he says, 'it was all I had with which to do good.' But, as he expected, everybody to whom he mentioned his wish to go to college, advised him to abandon such a wild scheme. But wild as it seemed to others, John would not give up his fixed resolve.

It would take too long to tell you of all the difficulties he had to overcome before he could raise anything like the necessary funds; and except for a little help from a society, called the Education Society for the Relief of Poor Students, it had all to be accomplished by self-help; and even when at length he went up for his entrance examination, he was obliged to perform the long journey to Newhaven on foot; and faint and weary as he was with the day's exertion and excitement, he was unable to procure either a dinner or a bed.

But all his troubles seemed light when, his examination passed, and every arrangement made, he at last found himself a student in Yale College, without any clear idea how he was to maintain himself there, but with a strong will and a firm trust in the Father of the fatherless.

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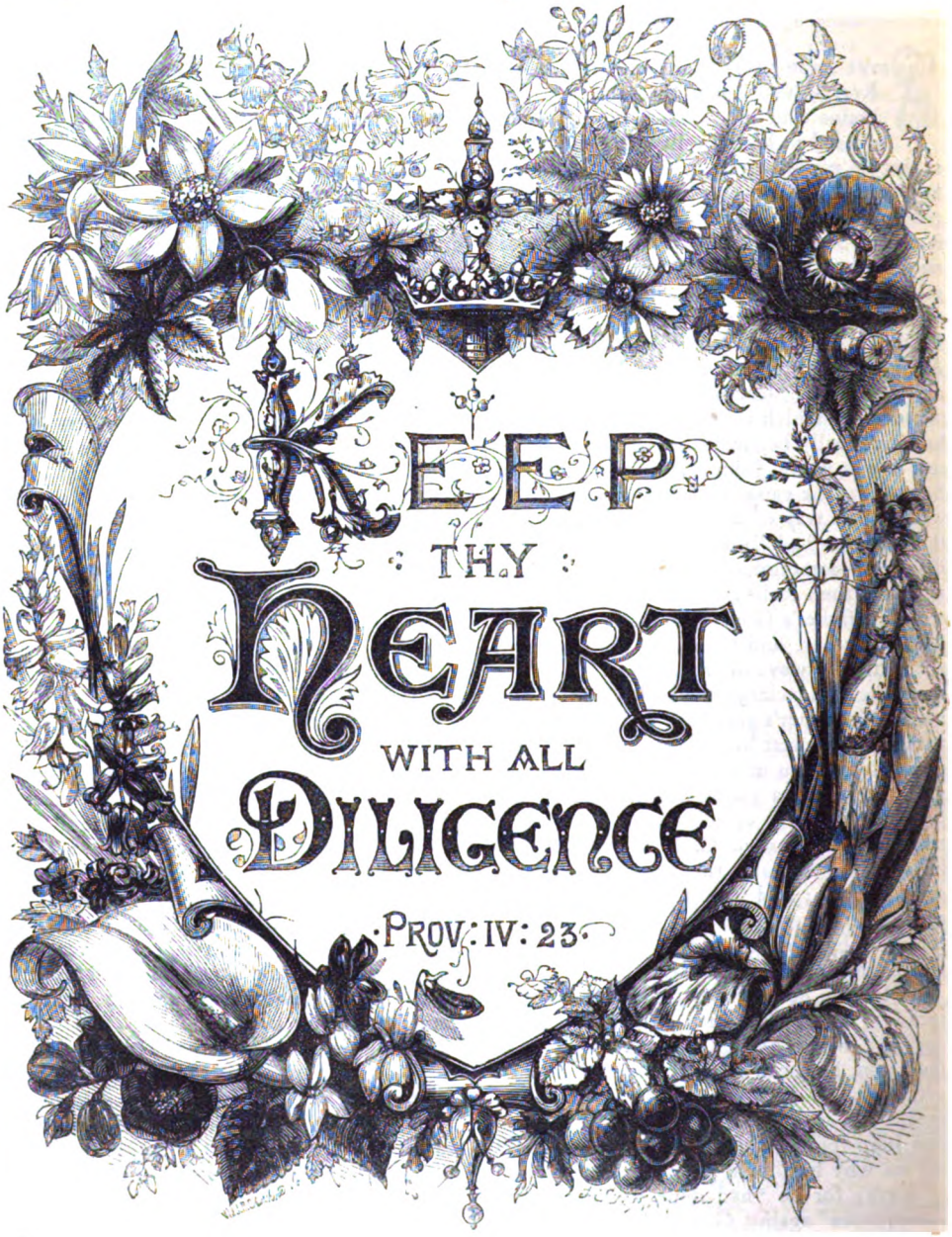

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THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER VIII.—FLEDA'S PRAYER.

FLEDA found a quiet spot in the copse and turned again to the passage she had seen on the wall.

'Auntie is right,' she thought. 'I can understand it well enough to see that I am all wrong. O, what shall I do!'

The words of the last verse suggested an answer: Return to the Shepherd and Bishop of your soul.

Fleda moved the boughs aside and peeped out to see that there was no fear of interruption, and then she fell on her knees and prayed, 'O Lord God, please forgive me! I have been very naughty, and I am very miserable. And the worst of it is, I am so afraid I shall do it again, for I am so hasty, and I can't cure myself of it. Pray, God, cure me! Make me one of Thy own lambs. Please, good Shepherd, put me into the fold, and keep me there, and help me to be good.'

She dried her eyes, and sat down for a moment to put the little ribbon into her new book to mark the passage, thinking doubtfully, 'I wonder whether it will make any difference, whether God really will take any notice.' In turning over the leaves to find the place, her eye lit upon the words, 'But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' 'Of course, I believe that He is; then why should I not believe that He will hear and help me. I do believe it. I know He will.' And the peace and joy which only trust in God can bring, entered the tempest-tossed heart, and shone in the face of the weary little sinner that had come to the Saviour.

'I'll give up to Mary in the next thing she sets her heart on, however unreasonable she is!' was Fleda's resolution as she took her place in the school-room. Well-meant, but rather hasty and unwise, till she knew whether the next freak would be right or wrong.

Prayers followed tea at Heathlands College, so that the younger children might not be sleepy. They always sang a hymn, and as many of the boys had sweet voices, it made a very pleasant addition to the service. This evening they sang,

> 'Father of mercies, in Thy Word
> What endless glory shines!'

Miss Hatherleigh noticed that Fleda sang with more spirit than she had shown for many days, especially the last two lines—

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'Teach me to love Thy sacred Word,
And view my Saviour there.'

Fleda slipped her hand into her Aunt's, as she loved to do, and they came upstairs together.

Aunt Lucy stopped before reaching the nursery door, and bending down, whispered, 'Have you found your Saviour in His Word to-day, my darling?'

Fleda's arms were round her neck in an instant as she answered, 'O, Auntie, I'm so happy, and it was your doing; you dear, kind, clever Aunt!'

'May God bless and keep His little lamb!' said Auntie reverently; and then, after a warm kiss, she hastened to her own room to thank the Lord for so quickly blessing her efforts.

Mary and Louie had been in too great a hurry to shut the door, so as Fleda came up to it she heard the former say, 'I wish Dick would be quick up. I dare say Fleda will object to my plan, because I propose it, she is so contradictious. I must try not to let it alter my affection for her.'

Fleda had stopped short on the mat at the sound of her own name, and her cheeks were flushed in a moment. But the twice-offered prayer was answered; the good Shepherd did keep His little lamb, and help her to be good.

'It is quite true, I am afraid,' she said to herself; 'but it is not going to be any more. I won't let Mary see I have overheard her.'

She stole gently back to the stair-head, and a few minutes after came in with Dick.

'We were so dull without you to-day, Dick, that we went to the Park before dinner, and there we met the little Pratts without their keeper.'

'What kind of animals are they when they are let loose?' enquired Dick.

'Very tolerable; of course, they would be nicer if they were trained as we are,' said Mary with a comfortable feeling of superiority. 'But Jane Pratt wants to know whether we will take a long walk to-morrow afternoon to a place called Winkle Hedge. We have never been there that I can remember, and she says it is famous for nuts.'

'Well,' said Dick, reluctantly, 'to tell the truth, I am not charmed with the prospect of a long walk with the Misses and Master Pratt; but if you girls wish we'll try it for once. What do you two think?'

Fleda hesitated. She felt before going off with these children they ought to ask their mamma if she approved of them; but even to suggest this in the mildest way, would be sufficient to make Mary think she was objecting to her plan again. Louie answered promptly that as the Pratts had so few enjoyments she was willing to go.

'What do you say, Fleda?' asked Mary.

'I don't object if you wish it.'

Something in the words or tone made the three others exchange glances, but just at that moment Martha returned, and sat down to sew with an air that showed she had settled for the evening.

ONE FALSE STEP.

Some years ago, I was taking a walk with a friend to see some great rocks at the top of a high hill. The hill-side was covered with trees, and thousands of ferns grew all around us, frequently covering the path we had to tread. When I tell you that quantities of great stones that had rolled down from the heights above us, lay hidden amongst the ferns, you will see that the path was not a very safe one. My friend, who had often ascended the hill before, and knew where the places of danger were, said to me now and then, 'Mind where you tread, just follow me; if you take *one false step* you may have a fall.'

Bearing in mind this good advice, and pondering the path of our feet, we both reached the summit in safety, and had a charming prospect of hill and dale.

This pathway up the hill reminds me of another path that every child has to tread,—I mean the *path of life*. There are hidden rocks around each of us, that we must be very careful to avoid; and snares laid for youthful

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feet by the great enemy, that would entrap us if we took one false step.

When Charlie Wilson told the first lie, it was a 'false step' which has given him sad trouble since. When Katie Brown took something that did not belong to her, it was a 'false step' which she has often wished had never been made. The worst of it is, that frequently one false step leads to another, and those who fall go from bad to worse.

I'll tell you what I would advise you to do: Ask Jesus to be your Guide and Saviour. He knows the way, and can keep you safe amidst the rocks and the snares that lie around you. Is He not saying to you now, 'Follow me'? Listen to His words; obey His call; tread in His steps; and when at length you reach the top of the hill, you will rejoice to feel that you are for ever happy and for ever safe.

JULIUS BRIGG.

My Dog Drake.

O HAD I only time and space,
Or could I see you face to face,
How many stories I could tell,
That boys and girls would love full well.

But to my story hark!
And you, I think, will say,
That dogs do more than bark
And frighten thieves away.

Our household pets can love
Both fondly, fast and true;
And my dog Drake oft strove
To say, 'How I love you!'

When sitting lone and sad,
My faithful dog would try
If he could make me glad,
By saying with his eye,—

'Come now and play with me;
Do, my dear mistress, come!
For sitting 'neath that tree,
You look so sad and lone.'

Then he would seek a stick,
And drop it on my knee,
As if to tell how quick
He'd fetch it back to me.

Then, O how fast he'd run!
How nimbly spring and bound!
So full of glee and fun,
He'd scarcely touch the ground!

And now I'm left alone,
And these old days are fled;—
My household pet is gone,
My good old Drake is dead!

But I can ne'er forget
His loving, soft, brown eye;
And how my dear old pet
To cheer me oft would try.

Even a dog can teach
A lesson unto man—
By gratitude and love,
And *doing what he can!*

. . . . . .

If boys and girls would like to find
The treasure of a happy mind,—
Then let them all, like my dog Drake,
Do something *for each other's sake.*

R. R. T.

The Young Bereans' Corner.

OUR young Bereans have acquitted themselves nobly, and have fully earned that honourable title. We have received a large number of really excellent papers, and very few which do not give evidence of painstaking and persevering research. It would be impossible, in our space, to mention the names of all who have sent good papers; the best are given below. We would remind all our young friends who are conscious of having done well, and yet have failed in the competition for prizes, that they have gained what will be of far more value to them than any prize we can give, if they have learned from God's Word the worth of prayer.

The first prize was gained by EDITH MAUDE GLIDDON, of Guernsey, aged 12.

An equal second prize has been given to two competitors, it being felt impossible to decide which had sent the better paper—ANNIE MARY GEDEN BATE, of Risca, Monmouth, aged 12; and JOSEPH C. MILLS, of Coleraine, aged 13½. The former showed a more intelligent acquaintance with the subject, and had given the answers more in detail. The latter had found a far larger number of examples, and had adopted a more methodical arrangement.

The following names deserve very honourable mention:—John Wesley Arnold; R. A. Paton; Mansfield Pogson; Emma P. Lee; G. Burscombe; Gertrude M. Pogson; J. D. Paul; Jane T. Badcock; Clara E. Dingley; Alice F. Wall; Mary J. Parkinson; H. A. Smith; E. Dunham.

The following, who sent exceedingly good papers, are under eleven. We are especially pleased with the efforts of these little ones: F. J. Piper; A. H. Warrall; H. A. Hodgson; Mabel Stead; Lillie Armistead.

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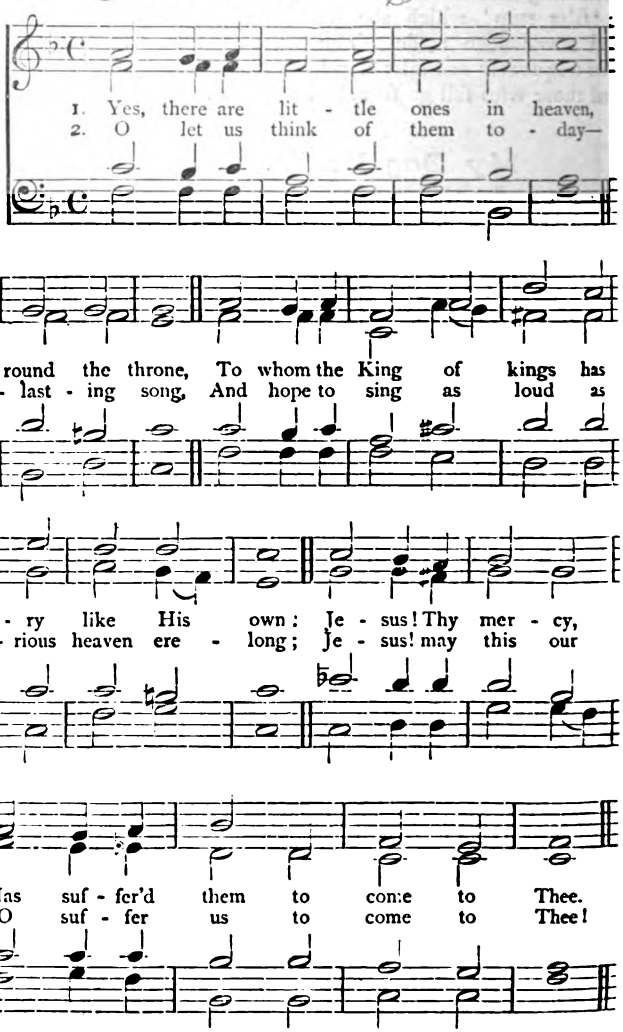
Little Ones in Heaven.


1. Yes, there are lit - tle ones in heaven,
2. O let us think of them to - day—
Just such as we, a - round the throne, To whom the King of kings has
Their sweet and e - ver - last - ing song, And hope to sing as loud as
given E - ter - nal glo - ry like His own: Je - sus! Thy mer - cy,
they In the same glo - rious heaven ere - long; Je - sus! may this our
rich and free, Has suf - fer'd them to come to Thee.
por - - tion be— O suf - fer us to come to Thee!

3. To come with humbleness of mind,
With simple faith, and earnest prayer,
To seek Thy precious cross, and find
Peace—safety—joy—salvation there.
O set our sin-bound spirits free,
And suffer us to come to Thee!

4. To come while we are young and gay,
While life, and joy, and hope run high;
To come in sorrow's gloomiest day,
To come at last, when death is nigh.
Lord! in that day our Guardian be,
And suffer us to come to Thee.

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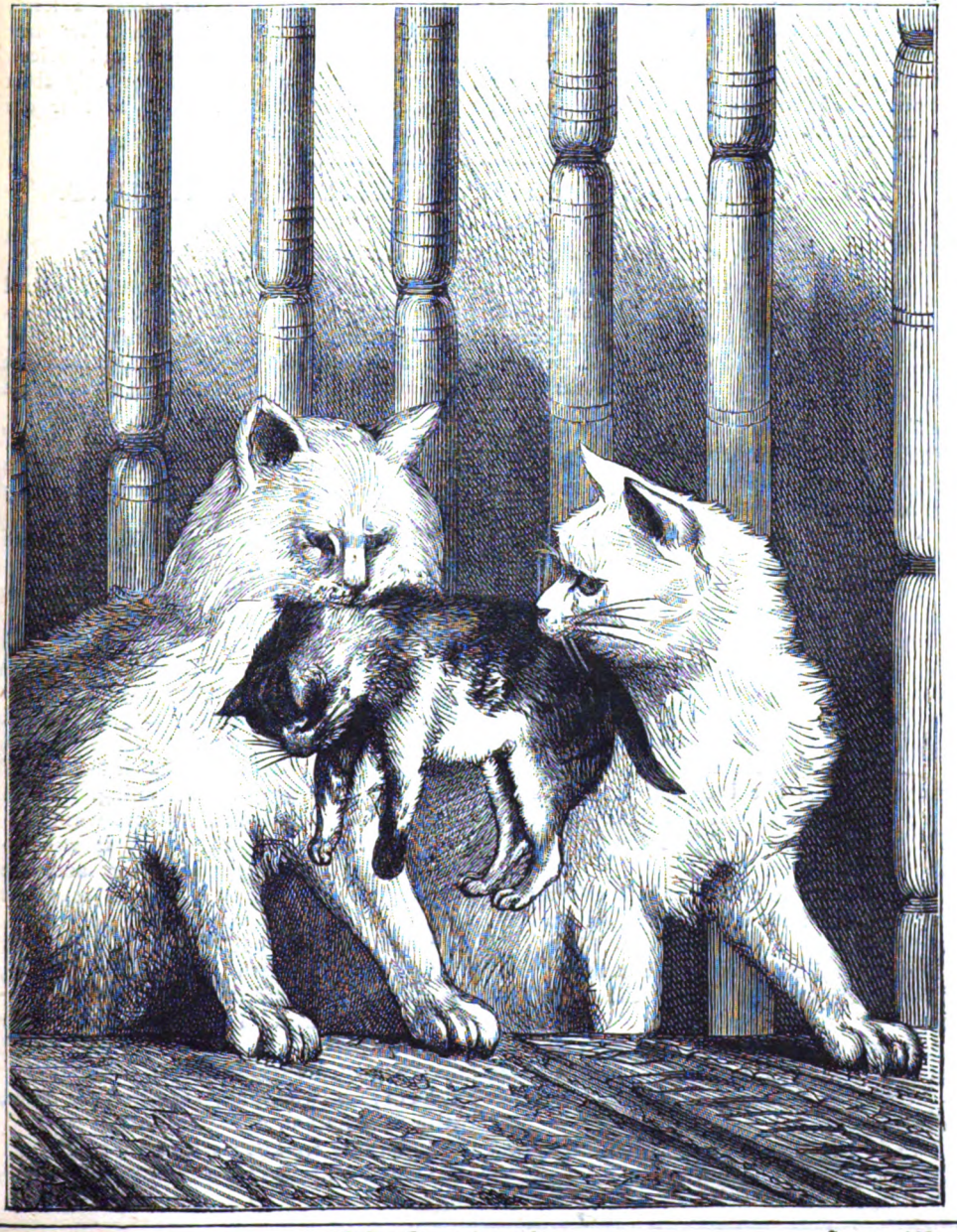
SEPTEMBER, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS



Help One Another.

See page 130.

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HELP ONE ANOTHER.

An invalid lady, a friend of ours, has two beautiful cats. One of them was in the habit of carrying her kitten every night upstairs to the lady's room. But at length kitty grew too big for her mother to carry alone; so the other cat obligingly came to her friend's assistance, and together they easily managed to take the kitten upstairs. Our little readers might learn a lesson of helpfulness from these cats. How many heavy tasks would become light and difficult duties easy, if we thought not only about helping ourselves, but tried to bear one another's burdens!

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER IX.—THE CHILDREN TRY BEING LITTLE DUCKS, AND DON'T LIKE IT.

The next morning Miss Hatherleigh came into the girls' bedroom before they were dressed, to tell them she was going out for the day.

'Papa and Mamma and Alfred and I are going in the phaeton to Beeley.'

'Then are we to have a whole holiday, auntie?' they asked.

Miss Hatherleigh did not stay for their remarks, but hurried downstairs. Evidently there would be no time to consult either her or Mrs. Clifton as to their new acquaintances, but Fleda felt very uneasy. She had vowed not to object to Mary's plan, and yet she knew that they ought to ask their mamma.

'I must never make such a stupid, hasty promise again; but I do not see that I can do anything but keep it this time.' Such was Fleda's conclusion, but she heartily wished the day well over.

At a quarter to three the four children set out; each, it must be confessed, with a little misgiving.

'I do believe they are not there,' said Dick, as they caught sight of the Aston toll-bar.

It was not until our four children had reached the gate that they saw the three others some distance from them, but evidently hurrying.

'You are not punctual, Miss Pratt,' was Mary's severe salutation.

'I am so sorry, Miss Clifton,' answered poor Jane, with that nervous, shrinking expression they had pitied so often.

'It was all Rodney's fault. I was just coming off by myself to tell you, when he did manage to start.'

'How still the air is to-day, Miss Murza,' said Louie, as they followed the older couple; 'we could hear your footsteps such a long way off.'

'It is very quiet; I am afraid we shall have a thunder-storm.'

'Not yet, I should think, the sky is so very blue; but it is quite hot enough.'

Dick was, of course, expected to walk with Rodney. Fleda let the other couples pass on, and waited for the boys, amply rewarded for her waiting by the grateful look of her victimized brother.

'Did you see the cricket-match last week?' asked Dick, by way of a beginning.

'Never heard of one. Where was it?'

'Never heard of it! Why, it was between the All England Eleven and the County Eleven. It was played at Guise Park. There were thousands there.'

'Well, I wasn't one of them.'

'The return match will be next Saturday, so you can see that,' said Fleda kindly.

'Thanks, miss. I don't care much for cricket.'

'Do you care for anything?' asked Dick.

'Yes; for two things,' answered the other, with deliberation.

'And may we know what they are?'

'One's bull-dogs.'

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'Do you keep one?' enquired Fleda, with a desperate effort to look interested.

'No,' replied Rodney, passionately. 'I had a regular beauty of a bull-pup given me, and father drowned it. He is a mean fellow.'

'O, hush!' cried Fleda; while Dick said boldly, 'Young man, do you call that honouring your father?'

'No, I don't, and no more wouldn't you,' answered the excited lad, 'if you were treated as I am. Father's no such pleasant name to me, I can assure you.'

The brother and sister walked on silently, for this was a new phase of life they did not know how to meet.

Meanwhile, their sisters had not fared much better. They were all intensely bored by their vulgar, ignorant companions, and would gladly have found some good excuse for cutting the walk short; but as they had agreed to go to Winkle Hedge, they saw no help for it. At length the desired spot was reached. The children uttered exclamations of delight as they flung themselves down on the velvety grass.

'Now, aren't you glad we brought you here?' enquired Jane Pratt, innocently.

'It is a very lovely place; I am glad I have seen it,' answered Mary, discreetly.

'Just the place to spend a holiday, if it were not such a horrid road to get at it,' remarked Dick. 'We shall be roasted going back. Do you often come here, Pratt?'

'I don't often have the chance.'

'Father says we are better without holidays,' said Murza, briskly; 'he wants Rodney to be a very clever man.'

'My brothers will be clever men, but they have two half-holidays every week,' answered Louie, proudly.

'Our father isn't like yours, miss; I only wish he was,' said Jane, with a sigh.

'He don't even care to make us happy,' added Rodney, moodily.

'I am very sorry,' said Louie, softly; 'I hope you will be happier by and by, when you get older.'

'O! we get on pretty well now,' said Jane; 'but it aint much thanks to him.'

Now, Fleda's ear was more correct than her eye. Drawing was an impossibility to her, and she was a very irregular writer; but she was a good grammarian, and the vulgarity of the Pratts' speech had irritated her beyond endurance.

'Did Miss Colon never correct you for talking bad grammar, and saying "aint"?'

'She was very sharp on us for French and all that,' answered Murza; 'but she aint very particular about English.'

'So I should judge,' replied Fleda, calmly.

Mary gave her a warning look, which reminded her not to be rude because the others were.

'How dark it has become,' said Dick. 'I believe after all we shall have a thunderstorm.'

'I think I hear it!' exclaimed Louie, holding up a finger for silence, and in a moment a bright flash of lightning illumined the dark wood.

'We are in for it, and no mistake!' cried Dick, with the calmness of despair; 'at least three miles from home, and no shelter near that I know of.'

'We must get out of this wood at once!' exclaimed Fleda, springing up, and offering a hand to Louie.

'What for?' enquired Rodney, in amazement; 'we are a little sheltered here.'

'It is so dangerous to stay among trees, lest the lightning should strike one,' answered Mary.

The Pratts hesitated to leave the shelter of the tall trees; but as the four others disappeared, they felt convinced there must be some good reason for their exposing themselves to the merciless storm, and by one impulse rushed after them. On they ran through the chilling, blinding rain, starting at every flash of lightning. It was, indeed, a desperate race.

'Stop, Dick dear!' gasped Louie. 'I can't run any more, and it does not signify, for I am wet through.'

'Here's a cottage!' shouted Mary, as she dashed past with her wet hair streaming down her back. 'Let us beg a shelter.'

A more forlorn set of children could

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scarcely be imagined than the seven who crowded into the little porch and hesitated to sully the shining red floor. Mary faltered, but Dick stepped up, cap in hand, to a tidy old woman who sat knitting a stocking by a cheerful fire.

WILLIE'S OFFERING.

BY EMILIE SEARCHFIELD, AUTHOR OF 'CLOISTER SAACH.'

Willie Clifford stood in the open doorway of his father's cottage. The flowers in the garden were very beautiful, but Willie was not noticing them; and when pussy came and rubbed softly around him, he only stroked her in a way which said, 'I can't be unkind to you, puss; but I am not thinking of you at all.' A few minutes later his mother came out with her bonnet and shawl on, and then together they walked away, all in the nice spring sunshine. They were going over to Crawford, for there Willie's father had a brother, who in his turn had a little boy of about Willie's age, and whom Willie loved very, very much. But to-day, as the boy walked along by his mother's side, she saw that all was not right with him: he neither ran, nor jumped, nor laughed, nor even talked; and very strange indeed it seemed for Willie to be so quiet and grave, and he on his way to Crawford too!

'What is the matter with you, Willie dear?' asked his mother, when she had waited what seemed to her a long time, and never once heard her darling's voice.

'Nothing, mother, only it vexes me to go over and see Charlie's dog. I don't want him, mother, for he isn't mine, you know; but I would do anything to have one just like him for my very own.'

'And where did Charlie's father get Rover?' asked Mrs. Clifford, and her face was covered with smiles as she spoke.

'At Old Simpson's, mother; and Charlie says there's one just like his left now. O! mother, may I have it? I'll take such care of it, and I won't let it hurt pussy; I won't, indeed.'

'We shall see, dear,' said Willie's mother. 'But my little boy mustn't be sad any longer, and he mustn't tease father either about the dog, for we'll see what can be done—never fear.'

Willie's birthday was coming on, and Mrs. Clifford, as she had before meant, gave her little boy a great surprise. He had been very good, and had not 'teased father,' though the dog was in his thoughts all the day long, and even at night his dreams were full of little dogs of all sorts of shapes. He was quite at sea as to when to expect his treasure; but his father and mother knew, for Mr. Clifford had been himself to Old Simpson's, and made the bargain, and on Willie's birthday he rose half an hour earlier than usual, in order that he might fetch the dog home before his little son should be awake. The sun shone brightly into the boy's little room, and something awoke him, he knew not what. Then he opened his eyes, and there, curled down by his side, was a dear

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little black and white terrier, the very dog which had haunted him, night and day, for so long.

'O, my dog! my dog! my dear, dear dog!' and the little fellow sprang up at once, and began caressing his pet. Then he dressed as best he could for joy, pausing each moment to bestow another pat and caress upon Carlo (for that was the name he and Charlie had chosen as being the next best to Rover), after which they both, the boy and the dog, went downstairs.

How he thanked his kind parents I leave you all to guess; enough, when I say, that Willie never had a birthday like that one before,—so bright and so full of joy. Charlie was, however, away with his parents on a visit to his grandmother, so that he could not share in all this birthday joy; still, Willie comforted himself with the thought, that Carlo could be trained by the time of his return, and then Willie would take him over to Crawford, and surprise Charlie with his dog and his funny tricks.

At length Charlie came home, and with him and his parents, his two little sisters as well. When Willie went over to see him, Charlie was at the gate, but instead of running to meet Willie, as was his usual way, he stood quite still, till Carlo, who had been loitering a little behind, gambolled on in front; then Charlie came forward with a great shout of joy. 'O, Willie,' he said, 'I'm so glad you've got Rover! I thought he was lost; and you've only been taking care of him for me!'

'Rover lost!' and Willie took his own dog up in his arms. 'I'm sorry for that, Charlie; but this isn't Rover; this is my own dog Carlo, that mother gave me for a birthday present. See, Charlie, Carlo hasn't a black spot over his right eye, like Rover.'

'Rover hadn't a black spot, either,' said Charlie, stoutly; and, I believe, they would have quarrelled there and then, had not Charlie's mother and little sisters come upon the scene.

'This isn't Rover, my boy,' said Mrs. Clifford; and then she kissed Willie, telling him she was glad to see him; but Charlie looked very, very sad, and Willie and the two little girls looked sad too, for his sake.

They did not have a very pleasant time, as Willie had supposed, for Carlo only served to make Charlie think of Rover, and this alone drove all pleasure away. Only the day before, Mary, the young servant left in charge, had fed the dog and let him loose for a while, as she had done every day since Charlie had left; but when she had gone to fasten him up for the night, he was no where to be found. She was in great trouble, of course; still, the knowledge that there was no blame to be laid to her charge, was a very great comfort indeed.

'Mother,' said Willie, after he was in bed that night; 'mother, I do pity Charlie so much, for whatever should *I* do now without Carlo!'

Mrs. Clifford smiled, for well she remembered how happy her little boy had been a year ago without a dog at all; yet still she replied, gravely enough:

'I like my Willie to feel for other people's troubles; but is Charlie so very much distressed about Rover?'

'Yes, and what's more, I shan't be able to go over there at all now; for he says he shall never be able to bear the sight of Carlo; and, mother, I *can't* go without Carlo, can I?'

Mrs. Clifford thought for a little while; then she said:

'Willie, dear,' and she stooped low so as to bring her head close beside her boy's, 'couldn't you give your dog to Charlie?

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then, you know, you could go over just as usual, and you could love Carlo all the same.'

'No, mother, I couldn't.'

'Willie, Who was it gave all up for us, and left us His life to be our pattern, so that we might do as He did?'

'Mother, I can't give up Carlo.'

'Very well, dear. Good-night,' and kissing him, his mother went away.

(To be concluded.)

THE UNWELCOME BABY, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM.

CHAPTER VI.—A LAST LOOK AT JOHN.

JOHN was obliged to work very hard in order to keep up with the other students, whose previous education had been far superior to his own. Then, too, he had to teach in a school of rough lads for several hours every day, in order to earn money to pay for his board at college. Yet, though his time was so fully occupied, he could not be satisfied without doing some special work for Jesus. He found out that in a village some distance from the college there was no Sunday service whatever, and as he was very fond of children, he determined to begin a Sunday-school for the poor little ones, who were growing up without learning to love the Lord or to keep the Lord's Day. Some of the parents were glad to let their children come, but others did not like the idea of the school. A gentleman, whose little daughter Clarissa was very fond of her teacher, one day enquired whether she was not tired of going to school, as surely she did not learn anything that she could understand.

'O, yes, father, I do,' she said. 'To-day I asked my teacher about that beautiful text, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days;"' and then she told her father how simply and clearly the verse had been explained to her.

Some time afterward, little Clarissa came to her father to beg him to give her ninepence; she wanted the money so much, and would not waste it, she said.

'But what do you want it for?' asked her father.

'Well,' she said at last, 'Mr. Todd has been ill, and is going away. O, he has been so kind to me! You remember how he explained to me that beautiful text, and I wanted to give him the ninepence.' The child fairly sobbed as she spoke.

A tear stood in her father's eye, too, as he handed her a bank-note for Mr. Todd, who was really in need just then. He began to feel very sorry for having opposed the school, as he learnt this lesson of charity from his little girl; and soon he, too, had found his child's Saviour. So you see this bread cast upon the waters had been found again

Mr. Todd once promised his little scholars that on the next Sunday he would tell them about the institution of the Sabbath, and why we ought to keep it holy. But the next Sunday happened to be an exceedingly hot day, and after his long walk Mr. Todd felt quite faint and tired; so he told the children that as he did not feel well, he must put off his lesson on the Sabbath for another week. He noticed that one bright little fellow looked much disappointed; but he could not know that it was the last time that that little boy would hear his voice. But so it was.

On the following Sunday, when Mr. Todd came to school, he found his children in a distressing state of excitement; and, amidst sobs and tears, they told him that little Lewis had just been drowned at the mill. This was the boy who had looked so disappointed the Sunday before. He had never been taught to keep the Sabbath holy, and had gone down to the mill-stream to bathe. Even on the Lord's Day the mill-wheel was set in motion, for the miller cared nothing for God's commandments. And the rapid

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current was too strong for the lad, and bore him right under the wheel, which, with one turn, crushed him to death.

Mr. Todd felt indescribably sad as he called at the house where the child's parents lived, and looked upon the mangled body of his little scholar; and ever afterwards, when he felt inclined to postpone duty to some more convenient season, he would think of little Lewis.

But now that our hero is no longer an unwelcome baby, nor even a boy, but a young man preparing for the ministry, we will say good-bye to him—for, perhaps, the story of his life after he grew up will not be so interesting to little folks. We need only tell you that, by God's blessing on his persevering toil for His glory, he became one of the most distinguished and eminently useful preachers and writers his country has ever known. And I am sure if all the boys who read this, resolve, like John Todd, to do their best and trust in God, they will find that He does direct their paths, and help those who, in humble reliance on His strength, help themselves. G. E. S.

HOW FARMER BROWN'S HORSE WAS CAUGHT.

BY AUNT EMILY.

'O PAPA,' cried Willie Leigh, as he and his little brother Edward rushed into their father's study, 'do you know that Farmer Brown's young horse is caught at last? James Brown caught him, and all by himself; he did it so cleverly! three men could not catch it yesterday, though they tried for more than an hour.'

'Well, suppose you tell me all about it, Willie; but take off caps and try to stand still; I think you look a little like two wild young horses yourselves.' The boys laughed, but did as desired, though they were so excited that standing still seemed to be difficult.

'Well, papa, when we were out yesterday, we met John Doyle, and he told us that he and Dick and Ned Brown were going to catch the horse, and that we could see them do it if we got up on the bank, where we should be quite safe; so we got up, and the men went into the field, and they had each a rope with a noose to throw over the horse's head, and they ran after it and shouted, and tried to drive it into a corner of the field, but it was all useless; the horse got frightened and galloped about, and never gave them a chance to put a rope over him; and John said he did not think any one could ever catch the horse, he was so wild; but old Mr. Brown said he was sure James would catch him to-morrow. The others all laughed, because you know, papa, James is a little lame, and Dick said he was sure the horse would knock him down if he went near it.' 'So I asked Mr. Brown how James would catch it,' said Edward, 'but he only smiled, and said, "In the right way, my lad." 'So we went there to-day,' continued Willie, 'and James got a close sieve and put some oats in it. He had a halter in one hand, but when we came to the field he held it behind him so that the horse should not see it; and then he walked quietly towards the horse, holding out the oats to him and calling him by his name, "Snow;" wasn't it queer to call him that when he has not a white hair on him? When he saw the oats he looked for a minute first, and then when James stood still he walked nearer, and at last put his mouth right down and began to eat; then in a moment James threw his halter over his head and had him prisoner; he did it so quickly Snow had not time to stir: wasn't it very cleverly done, papa?'

'Yes, indeed, dear, and I think you may learn two very important lessons from it; first, how much better wisdom is than mere strength of body. You see James, even though he is lame, accomplished what foiled the others, because he went about it wisely, or, as Farmer Brown said, "in the right way." The other lesson is, to resist temptation in whatever shape the devil holds it out to us. He often catches little children as the horse was caught, by means of something they would like to eat; he points out to them the

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James Catching the Horse.

See page 135.

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Elymas the Sorcerer. *See page* 138.

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beautiful pears hanging so low on the tree they have been forbidden to touch; and whispers that no one sees them, and at last the child yields to the temptation and pulls and eats the fruit; then the devil has thrown a chain round his neck made of the sins of disobedience and theft, and the chain gets stronger and stronger; for when he is asked about the fruit, Satan tempts him to lie, by saying he did not take it; and so on from one sin to another, as he grows up, until at last, unless some One stronger than Satan breaks the chain, the devil will drag him down to hell by it. Do you know Who is the only Person who can break the chain, Willie?'

'Yes, papa, it is Jesus; He can save us from our sins.'

'Yes, my boy, He can and will, if we ask Him.'

'We will papa,' answered both boys; 'and,' added Edward, 'whenever I see a horse with a rope round his neck, I shall think of the chain Satan tries to put round us, and ask God to keep him from catching us.'

'Do so, my child; and then you will have reason all your life to bless God for the lesson you learned to-day, by seeing the way in which Farmer Brown's horse was caught.'

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

VI.—ELYMAS THE SORCERER.

MONTH had slipped away since the last wet Sunday evening, but the children had not forgotten Aunt Kate's promise to read how Saul of Tarsus worked for Jesus.

'Was Saul a missionary?' asked Pollie. 'Mr. —— said in his sermon that something happened on Paul's "first missionary journey."'

'Yes, Paul spent the greater part of his time after his conversion in travelling up and down, preaching the Gospel, first to the Jews, and afterwards chiefly to the Gentiles. If you will look in the thirteenth chapter of Acts, you will see how he and Barnabas were called to this special work.

When Willie had read to the fifth verse, Aunt Kate said, 'Our Picture to-night represents what occurred at the town of Paphos in the island of Cyprus, which was the second halting-place of the missionaries.'

'What made them stop there?' asked Pollie?

'The Spirit no doubt directed them. Can any of you think why Barnabas would be very glad to stay there?' After a moment's silence, Aunt Kate said, 'It was his native island, and he would be glad to see his friends again, for it had been his home until he sold all his property and joined the Church. You will find the account in Acts iv. 36, 37. But now we will return to our Picture. Read to the thirteenth verse, Katie.'

'What is a sorcerer?' enquired Willie.

'One who pretends to change, by charms and enchantments, the course of events which God has ordered.'

'I should not have thought a Jew would do that,' said Katie; 'he must have known it was no use.'

'I suppose he did not care about that, if he could get money for it,' observed Willie.

'No doubt you are right. This man had probably been living some time in Cyprus, and seems to have had great influence with the governor.'

'Perhaps he thought a Jew would be more likely to tell the truth than a heathen,' suggested Katie. 'I should think he had heard of their wonderful God.'

'Very likely. Ah! children, it is a solemn thought that our position may give us great influence over others, which we may use for good or evil. Many a poor soul has been led astray by the thought, "So-and-so does it, and he is more likely to know what is right than I am."'

There was silence for a few moments, then Pollie asked, 'Auntie, why does it tell us here that Saul was called Paul as well? It seems such a strange place to put that in.'

'Does it mean that he was never called Paul before this?' asked Willie.

'I think it is likely he was known by both names. It was very common for Jews, espe-

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cially Roman citizens like Paul, to have two names, one being used by the Hebrews and the other by foreigners, who found Hebrew words very hard to pronounce. Probably the Greek name is mentioned here because this was Saul's first public appearance before the Gentiles, amongst whom he was henceforth to labour so constantly.'

'Would the governor have believed if Elymas had not been struck blind?' asked Katie.

'We cannot know that, dear; but it is plain that he was in great danger of being deceived by the sorcerer's clever arguments.'

'How different Elymas was from Ananias,' said Willie. 'He did all he could to help Saul to Christ, and this man tried his best to keep Sergius Paulus away from Him.'

'If I had been Paul,' exclaimed Pollie, 'I should not have liked my first miracle to have done harm to somebody.'

'Yet it did not do only harm,' remarked Katie, 'for it led the deputy to believe.'

'Yes, and perhaps the punishment was not without good effect on the false prophet himself. Perhaps in his blindness he thought of his wrong life, and, like Paul, turned to God; and there was mercy, too, mingled with judgment, you see, for he was only blind "for a season."'

'If anything could put him right, that would,' said Willie.

'We will hope so. It was a sharp remedy, but far better than going on in spiritual darkness. We have often cause to thank our Father for teaching us valuable lessons out of unpleasant lesson-books.'

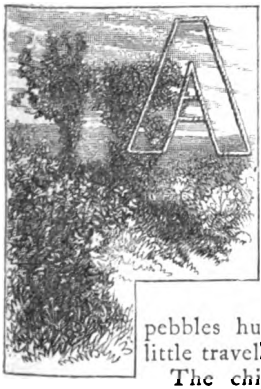
'My sprained foot was a disagreeable lesson-book,' remarked Willie. 'I wonder if I was meant to learn something out of that?'

'No doubt it was sent to make you patient, and thankful that you can generally run about; perhaps, too, God meant to teach you some very special lesson, which He will show you if you will ask Him. But it will be quite bed-time when we have prayed together.'

So they knelt down and prayed:

'O Lord, we pray Thee keep us Thy children! May we never lead others in the wrong way, or keep them from the right way; and make us quite willing to be taught in the way that Thou shalt choose, if only we are made like Thee. For Jesus Christ's sake.'

THE KING'S MIRROR.



A NUMBER of children were walking along a beautiful valley with lovely flowers and great trees, which, almost meeting overhead, cast a cool shadow across it. Here and there, to be sure, were marshy or stony places, where sharp pebbles hurt the feet of the little travellers.

The children had set out from many different places, but they were all bound to the same end—the palace of the King, where a great festival was to be held. They were all to go to the palace, and there be examined by the King himself, in order that those who pleased Him might be admitted to the royal gardens and join in the festival. The palace was a day's journey for all the children. So they travelled along, wondering what the city and palace looked like; but not always so happy amongst themselves as they might have been.

'What nasty pebbles!' cried a girl called Bertha. 'The valley is filled with them. I have sprained my ankle, I am sure.' 'That is because you hold your head so high,' said Adele, a girl with bright eyes that watched her companions very sharply. 'You are always looking about you; I wonder you have not hurt your feet before, or fallen over something.'

And Adele, with her head thrown back, and a scornful smile on her face, stepped away, thinking that she would be glad when the journey was over, and she could get away from these stupid children. In the King's gardens she expected to find many smart

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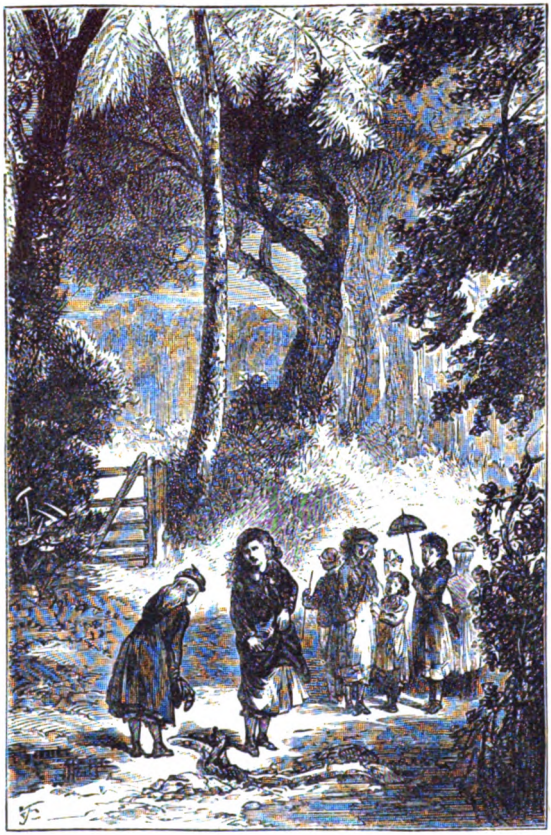

people who would admire her pretty face, her silk frock, and her necklace of pearls. All at once, she found herself stumbling over something which struck her; and, falling into a pool, she got a blow on the forehead that made her feel quite sick. If she had been looking she would have seen a fallen branch lying across the road, near a little pond; but now! her smart frock was wet through and streaked with mud, her necklace broken and half the pearls gone. She stamped and screamed with vexation; but the other children laughed and passed on, remembering how often she had made fun of them. Only Lily stopped and helped Adele to hunt for her precious beads. The beads had fallen into the water, however, and could not be found, and Adele began to shiver in her wet garments.

'Take off your frock and carry it, and put on my cloak; I do not want it,' said Lily.

'Your cloak is a dowdy old thing!' said Adele; but before long she found her skirts clinging to her so much that she could not walk, and the other children were almost out of sight; so at last she accepted the cloak, with a very bad grace, although it covered her from head to foot. By and by they came to a cottage, and Lily went in, and begged the mistress of it to dry and iron Adele's frock, which she kindly did, and made it look almost tidy again; but Adele was still very cross, and threw off Lily's cloak without a word of thanks.

But now clouds were gathering over the sun, and presently heavy rain began to fall and thunder to roll in the distance; and Adele, who could run very fast, left poor Lily alone, and soon reached the others, and they all crowded into an empty hut by the way-side until the shower was over. Adele was very thirsty after her run, and seeing a boy called Felix, with a bottle of milk, she asked for some.

'Why didn't you take a drink when you were in the pond?' said he, 'there was plenty of water. I'm thirsty myself.'

And he drank up the milk. Now it had been given to him for his little sister as well as himself, and when she saw it was all gone she began to cry. Adele, too, was angry. So they disputed, and annoyed each other, until the shower was over and they could continue their journey; and then Lily came up with them, looking very pale and tired, but making no complaint, and they all went on together once more.

Presently Felix was missed, and could not be seen anywhere. Adele would not wait for him, but Lily and two or three others did, and after a while saw him coming through a gap in a hedge. He would not say where he had been, but his lips and hands showed dark fruit-stains which told that he had been eating berries.

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'You know we were told never to go off the road for any reason, Felix,' said Lily.

'You might have brought me some berries,' said Bertha, who was always complaining.

'Mind your own business, all of you,' said he; 'I'm big enough to mind myself, I think.' He did not confess that he had stolen the fruit from a garden beside the road, and that the owner of it had caught sight of him and driven him off with a thick stick, but such was the case. Lily went on rather sadly. She wished that every one would be good and kind, and so make the journey pleasant.

(To be concluded.)

NATURE'S WHISPERS.

II.—THE HARVEST-FIELD.

It was an afternoon in August, the sun sent his scorching rays down from a cloudless sky upon a corn-field, where the full ears hung ripe and golden, ready for the reaper's sickle. The silence was only broken by the chirp of the grasshopper, and the lazy buzz of a few insects; at least, you could hear nothing else unless you listened very attentively, when you might have noticed a soft sound as of tinkling harebells coming from one of the many groups of flowers growing among the corn.

'You paltry thing!' exclaimed a dashing-looking poppy, addressing some wheat, 'what are you but a bit of dried-up straw? What do you mean by sticking yourself between me and the light? You can scarcely stand straight when there is no wind, while you bow and bend before the softest breeze! Why, a lark told me you were only grown for the pleasure of cutting you down again, and yet you nod your head, and look about you as if you were of the greatest importance; well, I'm glad I'm a poppy, and not a bit of withered rubbish like you.'

'Indeed,' said the wheat, 'I am not altogether such a useless thing as you suppose; it is true I cannot boast such gay flowers or elegant leaves, yet I believe that I and my relations are as much thought of in our way, as the finest poppy that ever grew;' but at this, all the flowers laughed so loud that some ants and several beetles came running up to see what was the matter.

'You conceited thing,' cried the corn-cockle, literally trembling with anger; 'why,

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the children trample you down in their endeavours to reach one of my blossoms; and how carefully the girls wreathe me in their hats, and place me in their nosegays; while those who may happen to pluck one of your ears, only rub you in their hands, and try how much they can blow away. Useless straw! your conceit only shows your ignorance.'

'And do you mean to say,' cried the fumitory, 'that you have not seen the faces of the little ones light up as they caught sight of me peeping at them from among your dried-up stems? how they push you aside to get their dear "wax-dolls," as they call me. And do you dare to repeat that you are as much thought of as I am?'

At this juncture the pimpernel, which had been too much occupied with studying the weather to take part in the conversation, now glanced to the earth (for there was a cloud in the west) and remarked, 'And what little girl, I should like to know, tripping along this path on her way to school, can resist the temptation to gather a sprig or two of my cheery blossoms? What corn-field is complete without *my* bright face? And who dares to compare *me* to the dowdy wheat?'

'Friends and companions,' said the poppy, 'it is altogether beneath us to waste time or words on these conceited upstarts, though I must confess I should like to see their humiliation.'

'The day you desire is perhaps nearer than you think,' said a voice, and, looking up, the flowers greeted with a faint murmur of welcome their friend the skylark. 'Good afternoon, ladies,' he said, as, turning his head from side to side, his bright eye wandered from one to another, 'I've some news for you. Flying about from place to place as I do, I manage to scrape together several bits of information; one is, that to-morrow harvest will begin, and you, mistress poppy, will have your wish; this corn, which has been causing you so much uneasiness, will be cut down, and'—but he was interrupted by the flowers, which, as he spoke, failed to detect the mischievous twinkle in his bright eyes, 'Then this nodding, bending straw will be out of the way, and we shall have this pleasant field to ourselves,' cried the corn-cockle. 'And I shall be avenged for the many rude speeches I've had to put up with,' said the poppy. 'But now, Mr. Lark, I see you are in haste to be off, so we'll say "Good-bye;" and remember, we shall hope to see you to-morrow, the day of our triumph.'

'Good-bye, ladies,' said their visitor, and snatching an insect by way of supper, he darted away, turning his head from side to side with a knowing look, while muttering to himself, 'Ah! well, poor things, it's best they should learn by experience.'

The morning came; the sun rose in a cloudless sky, and the shadows disappeared in alarm, as he dried the tears from the flowers' sweet faces, and smiled at them till they bashfully hung their heads and rested them on their leaves.

And how about the corn-field? While most people were wrapt in slumber, the reapers came with their sickles, before which the ripe grain soon fell in golden showers. The flowers heard the sound of its falling from where they grew, and as it drew nearer and nearer, their delight grew higher and higher; but it was soon turned, however, into distress and mortification, when a sudden stroke of the sickle laid poppy, corn-cockle, and all upon the ground.

'Alas!' cried the fumitory, 'what is to become of us now?'

'Foolish weed!' answered the poppy; 'you are ever ready to lose heart at the first discouragement. What if there *is* rather an upset to our plans? We are no doubt to be exhibited, or worn in the hair of some fair lady; or—but in short, there is, I dare say, no end to the honours about to be ours; and I, for one, though a little out of breath, care not a straw for this trifling incident.'

It was evening—the sun's slanting rays cast long shadows on the ground, when there passed through the field a very old man, with white hair and stooping gait, leading by the hand a little maiden. As they walked, they came to a heap of rubbish laid ready to be burnt, and as they passed, a soft, trembling voice fell upon the ears of the child. It was the fumitory, addressing a camomile

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with which it had been thrown aside,—'What are they going to do with us?' it asked; 'all this long, long day I have watched and waited, but nothing happens, and we grow weaker and weaker every hour; tell me, what are they going to do with us?'

'Burn us,' was the short and not very comforting answer.

'Impossible!' and the fumitory's voice sounded loud and shrill; 'you must mean the *wheat;* but I am speaking of ourselves—beautiful flowers—what is to happen to *us?*'

'Listen to me,' said the camomile, in a cold, unpitying voice; 'that wheat which you despise is to be gathered into barns; it is the farmer's glory and pride; but we flowers will be made into a bonfire, and that soon.'

'Alas!' wailed the fumitory; 'will they burn me? What harm have I ever done? I have injured no one, and they treat me thus!'

'Whether you have done harm or not matters little,' replied the camomile; 'the question with these men is, Have you done any good? If you cannot say "Yes," you perish as surely as the most noxious weed.'

'O, grandpa!' and the little girl clasped the old man's hand; 'the weeds are so beautiful, and some of them have done no harm—must they all be burnt?'

'Ah! child,' and the old man spoke earnestly and reverently, 'there is another harvest coming, when the good grain will be gathered into the garner; but the giddy do-nothings of this world, as well as those most deeply stained with crime, will be destroyed; for a useful life is true beauty in the eyes of Him Who looketh not at the outward appearance, but at the heart.' EDITH EDWARDS.

Very, Very Sensible.

Two little sisters—Frances, about seven, and Augusta, about five years old—were as happy as little girls could be, loving their parents and each other dearly. Sometimes, however, as it happens with the best of friends, little differences would arise. On one of these occasions, Frances, perceiving how matters were tending, with a thoughtfulness, decision, and self-command surprising in so small a child, said, 'I am getting angry; I had better go out of the room for a few minutes.' She acted immediately upon her resolution, and left the room for a short time. When she returned the storm was hushed, and they went to their play as happy as ever.

Look above You.

A YOUNG man once picked up a piece of gold lying in the mud. All the rest of his life, as he passed along the road, he kept his eye steadfastly fixed on the ground, in the hope of finding another; and, in the course of a long life, he did pick up, at different times, a good sum of gold and silver. But all the days, as he was looking for them, he saw not that heaven was bright above him, and nature beautiful around. He never once allowed his eyes to look up from the muddy filth in which he sought his treasure; and when he died, a rich old man, he only knew this fair earth of ours as a dirty road to pick up money as you go along.

The Early Called.

SIT with me in the gloaming, boy,
And ponder life's solemn truth;
Thy future is veiled, the present is thine;
O! what wilt thou do with thy youth?

As we read together the sacred page,
Did it seem a strange thing to be,
That, when Jesus first in the temple sat,
He too was a boy, like thee?

'Wist ye not,'—He questioned, as earnestly
They sought Him,—'that I must be
About My Father's business?'
'Yea; but what is that to thee?'

O, son! In thy boyhood's promise-time,
'Wist thou not,' the same Jesus saith,
'Thou, about My Father's business,
Art called to the life of faith!'

Then wait not for manhood's stature,
Nor for manhood's strength of years;
But follow the Master's leading,
With a trust that knows no fears.

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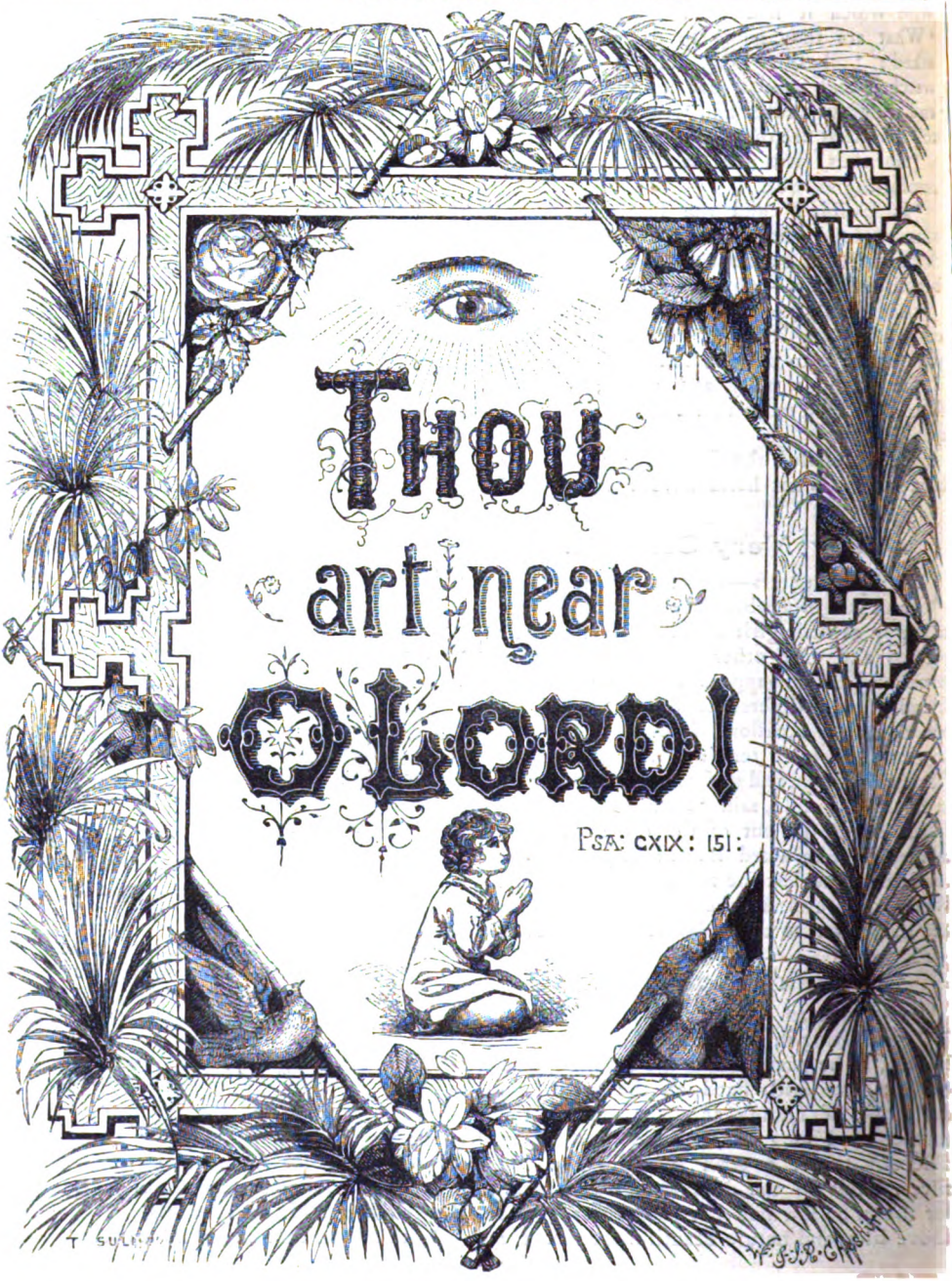

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EARLY DAYS

Florrie and Her Pets.

See page 146.

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FLORRIE AND HER FOUR-FOOTED FAVOURITES.

Do you know little Florrie? I am sure you must love her if you do, with her bright, mischievous, laughing eyes, and her little cherry of a mouth, that seems as if it could do nothing but smile; her cheeks as round and fresh as rosebuds, and her whole funny little self as gay and frolicksome as one of the lambs that jumps and frisks about in her papa's meadows.

Look at the Picture, and you will see Florrie's friends and playmates. There is Pearl, her little dog, he is her chief favourite, her faithful companion in her walks, when he carries her parasol, or goes in the water after sticks. You should see what races they have together in the garden, what merry games of hide-and-seek, and rolls and tumbles on the grass; in short, she often says, 'he is the very best dog in the world.' Then do you see Kitty in Florrie's arms? with her big, bright eyes, so full of fun when she is at play, so cunning when she watches a fly, so wise, yet so saucy, when she looks into your face, and her small sleek tail that is such a trial to its poor little owner, for it will keep twisting and twirling, always managing to escape being caught, though Kitty runs round and round after it so fast that it makes you giddy to look at her, yet she has always to stop, out of breath and tired, while that mischievous tail bows and bends to her just as far off as when she began the race; then there are her four little velvety paws, that creep along so softly that even the slumbers of the watchful Pearl are not disturbed by them, and her soft voice that cries 'mew, mew,' in such a pretty coaxing way when she wants you to play, that they must have hard hearts who can resist her. With all these charms, who can help loving Kitty? Not Florrie, at all events; you should see what merry games of ball they have together, and how Kitty races along the passages after the string which Florrie draws behind her. But now I must turn to the last, but not the least of Florrie's treasures, puss, Kitty's mamma. She is a very handsome cat, her coat is smooth and silky. It is true she is getting old, and that games which delight her daughter have lost their charm for her, yet she is so gentle and affectionate that she is almost as good a playfellow as Kitty. Do you see how she is pulling Florrie's dress, as if she would say, 'Take great care of my child, dear little mistress, and mind you don't hurt her'?

Now, perhaps you would like to know more about Florrie herself, so I must tell you that she is the youngest of the family, and her brothers and sisters are all too busy with their lessons to have much time to play with her, but as her four-footed favourites have no lessons to learn they are her chief playmates.

Now, don't you think that with such interesting pets Florrie is a very happy little girl? I feel quite sure she is; for she does not forget that loving Friend Who has given children their innocent pleasures, and Who is always waiting to bless and make them happy.

EDITH M. EDWARDS.

THE KING'S MIRROR.

(*Concluded from page* 141.)

The day was now wearing towards evening, and the towers of the great city appeared in the distance. The children became excited about their appearance before the King, and began to think of making themselves look clean and tidy. Felix tried to rub out his fruit-stains, and was vexed to find that they remained in spite of him. Adele brushed and curled her long ringlets. 'People will not look at my dirty dress when they see my pretty face,' she said to herself. But Lily spent her time in bathing Bertha's feet, which were swollen and painful. 'I don't think the King will let me in in this old cloak of mine,' she thought. 'I shall have to stay outside the gate.'

And so when Bertha's feet were bathed, Lily brushed little Minnie's hair and made her

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look nice. 'She will be so disappointed if she does not get in,' thought Lily. And then they all went together to the great gates leading into the royal park, where the King was sitting under a canopy, and several of His nobles standing beside Him. How the children trembled as they drew near!

There were immense numbers of people thronging about the gates, some passing through at a certain signal from the King; others, after a moment's delay before the throne, turning back, with shame and disappointment on their downcast faces. At last the children found themselves pressed forward to an open space before the throne, and there they stood, while the King's clear gaze rested for an instant upon them. Then He named Adele. 'I knew He would call me first,' she thought. The King's hand held before her a mirror, and she was bidden to look into it. She started back in horror. What ugly face was that—all twisted and deformed? And what was it that seemed written upon her brow as she looked? It was the word *Pride* in black letters; and, without daring to meet the grave, sad look of the King, Adele turned away from the gates of the lovely garden, and hid her shame in the crowd.

Felix was called next, and came with his hand upon his mouth, to hide the stains that he knew were there. To him, too, the mirror was presented, and after one glance at the hateful face it showed, with the word *Greed* inscribed upon the brow, he, too, turned away in confusion and terror. Not for him would the gates open.

For some others they opened, if the mirror showed a frank, smiling face, as it did sometimes, when the child seemed quite plain to those who looked on; but many who made very sure of getting in, and had taken great pains to dress themselves smartly, had to go away, after seeing how ugly and deformed they looked in the King's mirror.

At last came Lily, leading Minnie by the hand. She scarcely hoped to pass through herself, when so many others had been rejected, but she hoped the King would be pleased with Minnie, and find some one to take care of her; and as she came before Him she ventured timidly to look into His face. If He smiled, she would make her request, she thought.

The King did smile upon her—a tender, gracious smile; but Lily's courage failed her, she dared not speak. At a signal from His hand the massive gates were rolled open, and Lily heard Him say,

'Enter, My children; the Festival is for all who are true and kind; who can look in My mirror and not be ashamed.'

And Lily, glancing in the mirror as she moved forward, saw within it a face so fair and sweet that she never thought it could be her own. But all those who looked on her saw above her brow the appearance of a star, and the words, *Love* and *Humility*, in shining letters.

E. S. W.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

VII.—PAUL THE PRISONER.

'You said we should hear more about St. Paul, Auntie,' said Willie. 'I hope you have some Pictures to show us.'

'Yes, here are two, where Paul is in a very different position from what he was in the last we saw; then he was Saul the Persecutor; now he is—what, Katie?'

'An Apostle,' said Katie.

'Yes, but I mean something else. He is Paul the Prisoner here, being tried before the wicked heathen judge, Felix; and in this picture he is making his defence before Agrippa and Festus, after he had been in prison for some time.'

'O dear!' exclaimed little Pollie, 'I am sorry for him.'

'He was far more to be pitied before, Pollie. I am sure he did not feel sorry for himself. Katie shall read his own opinion on the subject. You will find the account in the 26th chapter of Acts; begin at the 24th verse.'

When she had finished reading, Willie said,

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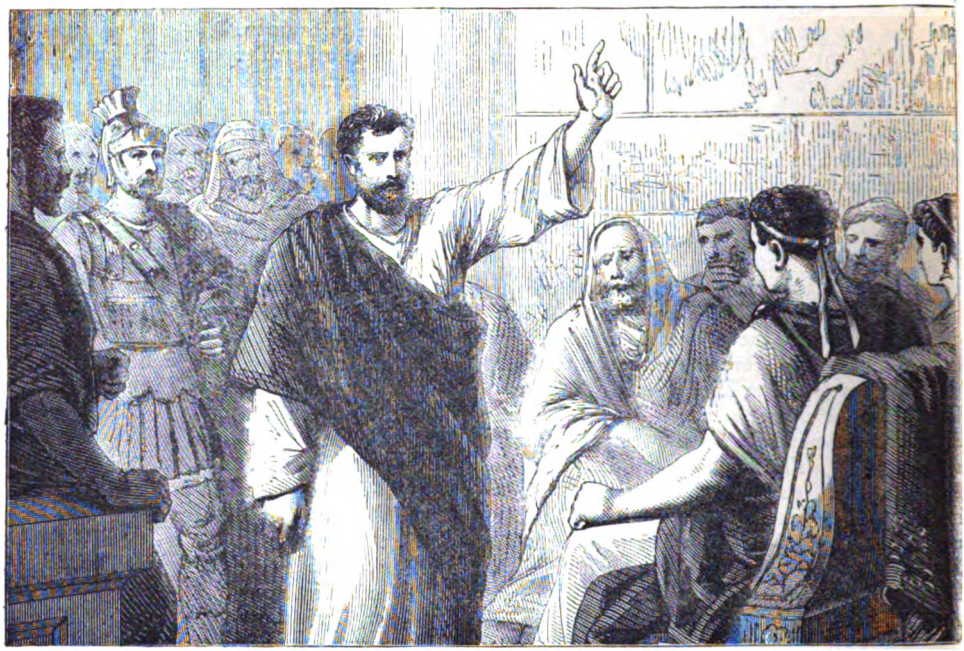

Paul before Felix.

'I would rather be the prisoner than the persecutor. Paul knew he was much better off than King Agrippa.'

'Yes, indeed he was. But can you tell why Paul, with his bonds and in the prison, was so much happier than Agrippa in his purple robes and with his palace?' 'Wasn't it because he was a Christian?' asked Katie, after looking for a moment at the chapter.

'Yes, because he belonged to Jesus; and Jesus was always with him. You remember those beautiful lines we sung at chapel last Sunday:

> "Thy Presence makes my Paradise,
> And where Thou art is Heaven!"'

'Paul always had that Paradise, while poor, rich Agrippa in his palace knew nothing of that sweet Presence. What a pity he wasn't quite persuaded,' said Willie.

'Ah, indeed it was! but I'm afraid he was not really in earnest; for you see as soon as Paul begun to urge him to be altogether on the Lord's side, he got up and went away, like many people do now when we ask them to decide for Christ at once.'

'Wasn't it Felix who said, "Go thy way for this time?"' asked Pollie. 'I remember that because Mr. R— preached about it a few Sundays ago.'

'I'm glad you remember, Pollie. Now can you tell me anything he said?'

While Pollie was trying to think, Willie said:

'He told us we ought not to put off coming to Jesus, because each time we said, "Go thy way," made it easier to say it again, and by and by we should get not to tremble at all—'

'O, yes!' put in Katie; 'he said that Drusilla didn't tremble because she was a Jewess, and had heard it all so often before—'

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Paul before Agrippa.

'And he told us some dreadful tales,' added Pollie, 'about people who put off.'

'Yes,' said Aunt Kate, 'that reminds me of a story I read when I was a little girl—not a "dreadful" tale; but it makes me feel very sad, because it shows how the truth, when it is often heard, but never heeded, loses its power either to draw or to drive. It was about a little beggar girl who had never heard of Jesus or heaven, till one day, when a kind gentleman sent her to school, where she learnt two little texts: "God is love;" and, "Thou God seest me." They were very carefully explained to her, and the truth seemed so strange and precious she thought all the bad people whom she knew never could have heard about it. On her way home she saw some rough boys teasing a poor lame girl, so she went up to them and asked, "Do you know what I heard to-day, 'Thou God seest me'? He sees you now." But they interrupted her with a mocking laugh. "Of course we know that, you silly; tell us something fresh." A little further on she noticed a woman cruelly beating a dog, so she went up to her, and said very timidly, "Please, Ma'am, have you heard?" "Heard what?" she asked in surprise. "Why, that 'Thou God seest me,' and 'God is love'?" "Of course I have, child," she answered; "thems very old words." And the little beggar girl went away, feeling very much subdued; and wondered how, if they knew so well that God saw them, they could be so wicked.—But now we have just time for one hymn before Papa comes in. Let us sing, "Almost Persuaded."'

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WILLIE'S OFFERING.

BY EMILIE SEARCHFIELD, AUTHOR OF 'CLOISTER SAACH.'

(*Concluded from page* 134.)

THE next day was Sunday, and Willie went to Sabbath-school as usual. There was a strange gentleman there, however, who, after the hymn and prayers were over, spoke to them nicely of the love of Jesus. He told them of His life, of His death, and that He still prays for us who are on earth. Then he told them of the great judgment, and that Jesus would be there, His love being quite strong enough to keep His own people from being afraid. Then, at the last, he taught them to repeat from memory the sweet words of the Great Judge Himself, to those who have lived and loved for His sake: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto ME.'

The youngest child understood the words the gentleman spoke, and when Willie went to bed that night he surprised his mother by saying, 'Mother, I think I'll give Carlo to Charlie to-morrow.'

'God bless my noble boy,' his mother replied. She could say no more; but Willie knew that she was glad, and that Jesus, too, was looking down upon him with a smile.

Time passed, and the golden autumn was come, yet nothing had been either heard or seen of Rover, and Charlie, who had taken Carlo as a free gift, so prettily had Willie offered his pet to him, was quite happy again; and Willie tried not to care—tried, too, to remember *to* Whom he had given his one treasure and playfellow. Tarring-bay, as the village was called in which Willie lived, was close by the sea, and the little boy often went down to the beach to play, or ramble amid the rocks, but seldom to Crawford; for he feared that if he saw Carlo too often he should wish to have him back, and that, he knew, would be wrong. Now, some way along the coast was a sort of hut, in which lived an old fisherman, called Nat Andrews. This Nat had a grandson who lived with him in the miserable hut upon the beach, and the grandson's name was Joshua. Now Nat was poor and ignorant, knowing nothing, or next to nothing, of the God Who had made him, and as Joshua did not go to school, he was just as ignorant as his grandfather. Willie Clifford often came upon Joshua, or Josh, as he was called, down upon the beach, and one day when he went there as usual, there was Josh sitting upon a huge boulder, eagerly examining the pictures of a new book which he held in his hand.

'Look'ee here, little chap,' he said, as Willie came near; 'd'ye think ye could tell me what's in here? A lady gi'ed 'em to me yesterday, and I don't know a letter what 'tis all about.'

Now Josh was said to be a bad boy, and as he was so much bigger than Willie, the little boy almost feared to go near. He did, though, and read a good part of the book to Josh, and as it told little stories of Jesus and His life on earth, he was able to explain it all as he went on.

'Eh, but it's fine to read, isn't it?' said Josh. 'I wonder, now, if I could learn to do it!'

'For Jesus,' whispered a little voice within, and Willie replied, 'I'll come down here every day and teach you, Josh, if you like to try.'

'Ay, to be sure I will try; and look you here, little chap, if I can do anything for you, just you say so, and I'm yer man.'

Well, the lessons went on for some time, and so good and gentle was Willie, that Josh soon learnt to love him, and, in his poor way, I think he was beginning to love Jesus too. One lovely day, Charlie and Carlo passed by high up on the rocks; Charlie did not, however, see Willie and Josh, although they saw him, and Willie, as he watched the dog, heaved a deep sigh, and more than once brushed away a tear, which he hoped Josh had not seen.

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'What is it, little chap?' asked Josh.

'Nothing,' said Willie, and then he went on reading as before.

But Josh was not to be put off so. He waited till Willie had done; then he said, 'Little chap, tell us all about it;' and he actually put his arm round little Willie's neck.

Then Willie told him all, except that part which spoke of how he had given up Carlo for Jesus' sake, and how much he had loved the dog, and longed, at times, for him ever since.

'I 'spect now yer loved un dearly, didn't yer? Ah! yer gi'ed un to the little chap over at Crawford. Well, well!'

'Please, don't say anything about it,' pleaded Willie; 'only if I hadn't told, you'd have thought that I didn't like you, and I do.'

'An' I likes you, and I ain't a goin' to say nothing. I'm a goin' to do, and you must listen to me, little chap. Back some time agone, as I wor down by Crawford Mill, a little dog like the one t'other little chap had wi' un com'd up, and I kinder liked un, and—and I took un home.'

'O, Josh!'

'Ay, but wait a bit, little chap! Yer never know'd what 'twor to be miserable and hungry half yer time, and nobody but the old un' (he meant his grandfather, and Josh knew no better way of speaking) 'to speak to, and the little cretur wor so fond like; and now I loves un jest as you loved t'other. He's a pretty little thing,' went on Josh, 'and has a black spot jest as yer said, over one eye, and I've kep' un well. I'll bring un back, and ye can keep un, or gi'e un to t'other, whichever yer likes.'

The last words came out with a sob; big, rough fellow as Josh was, he could not give up his pet without it.

Willie heard all, but he said never a word. He thought—yes, he thought *he* could do without Carlo; but Rover was all poor Josh had to love, and the sweet, mellow sunlight seemed to him as a smile from heaven; so he arose, and peering into Josh's bowed face, said, 'You keep Rover.'

'No, no,' Josh began; but Willie stopped him short.

'I mean it, Josh; I won't have him, nor Carlo neither. You see, I didn't know before, and I was happy—at least, I was getting so—and now I shall be ten times happier, for I shall think that you've got something to love; and you will be glad, too, Josh, and love Rover better than ever, won't you?'

'Yes.' Josh was silent a good while; then he said, 'I say, little chap, I thinks as how you're a taking arter Him up there!' and he gazed reverently up to the bright, blue sky. 'If ever I takes arter Him too, it'll be all 'cause o' you; you've teached me a mighty lot in these few days; but this last beats all the rest, and I—I loves you, and Him, too, for it all.'

The sun still shone, and the sea rippled, and Willie was—O, so happy! He had given of his best to his Saviour; and as he and Josh said 'Good-bye,' the little boy thought that Jesus was with them, and that one day Josh and he would very likely hear Him tell the story of his willing gift in the glorious sunshine of heaven.

NATURE'S WHISPERS.

III.—THE LIGHT OF LOVE.

'MOTHER!' said a young skylark, as peeping from under its mother's wing it took its first look at the world it had so lately entered, 'Mother, the earth is a beautiful place, and I am so happy. Are not you?'

'Yes,' said the mother.

Perhaps the little thing looking up at her, and the twittering voice that put the question, had as much to do with the answer as anything else.

'O, how I love the sun!' the skylark said again; 'he makes everything happy. See how the flowers turn their pretty faces up and smile at him; and he makes all the birds so glad! the brighter he shines, the sweeter is my father's song.'

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Willie Teaching Josh. *See page* 150.

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The Baker's Goat.

See page 154.

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'You are right, my little one,' said the mother; 'light is life.' And then she was silent, for all the young birds had gone to sleep, and did not wake till their father stood before them with their dinner of ants' eggs. Then the one that had been talking popped his head out again, and saw that the sun no longer looked lovingly down on the little nest.

'O, mother,' he cried, 'the sun is not kind, as we thought, but cruel! See, he has hidden his face behind that cloud, and will not shine upon us; and yet he knows how we want him. O! why does he do this?'

'My child,' the skylark replied, 'it is not the sun that has ceased shining, he is ever the same. That dark cloud that has risen to hide him from our sight, belongs to *our* atmosphere. He is as he was, bright and glorious.'

'Mother, mother!' cried her nestling, 'I see him again. The cloud passes, and he is as he ever was; I am content.' So saying, he crept close under the protecting wing drawn so tenderly over him, and slept once more. The shadows were long when he woke; the birds around sang their evening hymn of praise; the voice of the nightingale sounded mellow in the distance; over all there was a peace with which his frightened, tremulous tones jarred, as he cried, 'Ah, mother, the sun is surely leaving us now; see, he is gone!'

But the mother answered, 'No, my child; not so, he can never leave us; it is we who turn from him.'

'But shall we see him again?'

'Yes, my little one, when we turn to him; we have but to do that, and he must shine upon us; he is unchangeable. In spite of the many times we turn away from it, in spite of the clouds that rise to hide it from us, the light shines ever—the light of love.'

EDITH EDWARDS.

THE BAKER'S GOAT.

A BAKER and grocer in our village has a tame goat, which follows his cart as he goes on his rounds, trotting along after his master like a dog. He pays little attention to anything or anybody else, but keeps close to his master's cart. Our little readers would be much amused by this novel sight; and you may be sure the baker's goat is quite an important individual in our village.

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER X.—A DRENCHING SHOWER.

PLEASE, may I bring my little sisters in out of the storm? They are tired and wet and cold. It's too bad to make such a mess, but what are we to do?'

'Come in, my dears, certainly. Why, bless me! you'll catch your deaths of cold. Are you far from home?'

'Don't tell who we are,' muttered Rodney.

'We live in Heathlands; I suppose about two miles from here.'

'Dear, dear; my man is away with the cart and horse, or he should have driven you all in.'

The little cottage was soon all in a steam, while the children did that most dangerous thing, dried their wet clothes as they wore them.

'The Heathlands omnibus goes past at six; you had better wait and go down in it,' said Mrs. Dix, retreating to her easy-chair and her knitting.

'Have you any money, Mary?' asked Dick in a low tone.

'Only two-pence half-penny,' replied Mary, after feeling in all her pockets.

'If you haven't got money, you can get it from your pa when you get in,' suggested Mrs. Dix. 'I dare say the conductor might know him by name.'

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'Pa 'd never pay for us,' whispered Jane.

'Never mind,' said Rodney, 'we can give false names.'

'And then their pa will pay for us, if the 'bus man says we were with his children,' whispered Murza, with a grin.

Only Fleda overheard this conversation, but her resolution was taken instantly:

'I think we had much better go on, it is not raining so heavily, and I am sure we should be safer walking than standing still in our wet things. We are rested now, and much obliged to you, ma'am, for letting us come in.'

So saying she went to the door. It had almost ceased raining; the storm had moved on, and was hanging over Heathlands. As they turned out of the hot steam into the open air the children shivered violently. Dick and Mary hesitated for a moment to follow Fleda and Louie, who had started hand in hand; but Fleda said impressively, 'I have a good reason, pray come along,' and they yielded.

As soon as they were out of the garden, Fleda began to tell what she had heard; but the Pratts rejoined them before she had time to utter many words. In about ten minutes the storm returned as violently as before. How miserable they were, soaked to the skin, their clothes dragging heavily, the water in their boots going *squish squash* every step they took.

'Here's the Aston bar at last!' cried Mary, joyfully. 'This is our turning; good-bye, Miss Pratt.'

'Good-bye, Miss Clifton; I hope next time we shall have finer weather.'

'There will be no "next time," Miss Pratt; 'we decline the honour of your friendship.'

'It isn't our fault it rained,' objected Murza.

'I overheard your plan for lying and cheating about the omnibus,' said Fleda as quietly as she could; 'and we do not wish to have anything more to do with you.'

She turned the corner abruptly, without giving them time to reply, and was instantly joined by her brother and sisters. All walked in silence till fairly out of ear-shot of the Pratts, and then began to compare notes of their experience. Mary was, of course, intensely mortified, as she had brought it upon them, though she had done what she could by way of amends in formally breaking off the acquaintance, even before she had heard Fleda's account of the whispered plot.

'Shall we tell mamma all about it?' asked Louie as they drew within sight of home.

'Certainly not!' exclaimed Mary, flushing deeply. 'We did not mean to do anything wrong; it was an experiment, and has turned out a mistake; but there is an end to it, and we shall take care not to try it again.'

'I think we ought to confess,' said Fleda.

'What good could it do?' argued Mary; 'if we had meant to be naughty we ought to confess, of course; but this was only a mistake. Really, I should not like mamma to know that we had spent an afternoon with such vulgar children. She would feel so excessively humiliated.'

'In that last sentence for "she" read "I,"' said Dick under his breath. Fleda nodded.

'Of course, if you think it would only grieve mamma for no purpose, we had better not tell her,' added Louie.

'I do, assuredly,' said Mary. 'I am the oldest, and it was principally my doing, though you all agreed, you remember. However, I am quite willing to take the responsibility, and if mamma ever does happen to hear of it, I will explain why we kept it from her. So make your minds quite easy about it.'

They stole in by the back way, and reached the nursery without exciting attention, for every one was busy fighting the storm. It was spoken of with a shudder ten or twelve years after it had occurred.

'My! have you children been out in all that storm!' was Martha's first exclamation. 'You must go to bed every one of you, and have something warm.'

As she spoke she set a light to the ready-laid fire and took down her kettle.

When Mr. and Mrs. Clifton returned, they were not surprised that the children had been out in the tempest, as they had expected them to take a long walk on their holiday afternoon; but were thankful to find them safe, as seven people had been struck by lightning, besides several horses and cattle.

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UNCLE GEORGE'S FRUITLESS WALK.

UNCLE GEORGE lived in the country, some miles away from the nearest railway-station, so when he wanted to travel by rail he must first walk a long way. One afternoon, in the depth of winter, he set off for the station. The fields and the trees were all white with snow, and the ice crackled beneath his feet. By and by he came to a place where the road divided, and he was in some doubt as to which way was the right one.

He stopped to think; but the roads looked so different, now all was covered with snow, from what they did in the summer, and it was beginning to get dusk, so that he was some time before he could decide which road to take.

Looking about he saw a guide-post, which he eagerly approached, hoping that it would furnish him the information he so much needed.

Uncle George's sight was not bad, but the night was so swiftly coming on, that all his efforts to read the inscription on the guide-post were in vain. In great fear lest he should miss the train, he hurried off in the direction of a light which shone from the window of a farm-house not far away, and asked to be shown the road to the station. The good woman who opened the door, said to him, 'You are in the wrong direction, Sir; you must go back to the guide-post and take the road straight before you.' Hastily thanking her, he retraced his steps, pursued his journey as rapidly as the state of the roads would permit, and soon found himself in sight of the lights at the station. Hurrying forward, he arrived, but only to hear that the train had gone, and that, as it was the last one that day, his intended journey must be postponed!

Leaving Uncle George to rest awhile after his fatiguing and profitless walk, let me tell you that only the day before he had bought a lantern to take with him when he went out in the dark.

Now if he had had the lantern with him, burning brightly, when he stood before the guide-post, he would have been able to see which was the way to the station, and would have caught his train. But the lantern, ready trimmed, was standing on the shelf at home!

The Psalmist says, 'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.' But how many of us, though we have the Bible on our shelves, neglect to seek this 'Light of life' on our daily path, and so continually take the wrong turning! Never let us venture to tread the dark pathways of the world without this friendly light. Compared with the Bible lantern all others are 'dark lanterns' indeed.

'How precious is the Book Divine,
By inspiration given!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heaven.
'This lamp, through all the tedious night
Of life shall guide our way,
Till we behold the clearer light
Of an eternal day.' J. BRIGG.

ABIJAH.

WHEN the coo of the dove sounded faintly and low
Through the soft sylvan shade where her nest she had made,
A mother was hastening, distracted with woe,
To the home of the Prophet in yonder still glade.

In his own little chamber that fronted the west,
Through whose window crept hundreds of whispering leaves,
Her darling lay long in a pitiful rest,
Lay and gazed at the swallows' nests under the eaves.

She came all alone with her proud head bowed down,
And o'er-veiled so that no one her coming might know,
But her thoughts she had left with her child in the town,
Who was weeping alone, 'because mother stay'd so.'

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Now she stands in the porch of the Prophet's low door,
And sobs o'er the roses and dare not go in;
But he cries where she stands on the sun-pattern'd floor,
'Come, wife of the mighty—the mighty in sin!

'I know thee, though God has kept light from mine eye,
And Jehovah has seen thee with lowering frown;
Thy boy like a flower in spring-time shall die,
E'er the sun in the realms of the west has gone down.'

Now the fields in their beauty with haste doth she tread,
But the calm and the gladness and glory have flown,
For she knows that her darling lies dying; or dead,
And gone to those regions where woe is unknown. MARK MERVYN.

THE THISTLE IN THE HEART.

'I've come again, Mamma,' said little Lillie White, as she ran into the room where her Mamma was writing.

'What's the matter with my little girl this time?' said her mother. 'You haven't another thistle in your finger, have you?'

'No, Mamma, the finger is well now; but there is something stinging me here in my bosom. You needn't unfasten my dress, Mamma; you wouldn't see it. I know what it is; it's wrong feeling there. I hate Carrie Marsh! She is never kind to any of us; but her aunt gives her the prettiest things you ever saw. Now she has sent her a blue dress, and a doll dressed in pink and white. She showed them to me, and said, "You can't have such pretty things, Lillie White." That made me hate her. I know it is wrong to have this feeling, and it stings in my heart worse than the thistle did in my finger. Won't you take this out, too, Mamma?'

'Only Jesus can take out a sting like this,' said her mother, putting her arms very gently round her darling's neck. 'Go to your room, my dear, and kneel down and tell Jesus all about your trouble. Ask Him to forgive you for giving way to wrong feeling, and to take away the sting from your heart.'

The little girl went to her own room. After a while she was seen walking in the garden, talking to her poor soiled dolly as lovingly as Carrie Marsh could have done to her fine new one. By and by she raised her bright and smiling face to the window, and seeing her mother looking down, she said:

'It's all right now, Mamma; Jesus has taken away the thistle from my heart, just as you took away the one from my finger.'—From *Rays from the Sun of Righteousness.*

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THE WELCOME ROSE-BUSH.

'COME, Violet,' said Mrs. May to her little daughter, 'the clock has struck twelve; put away your books tidily, and bring your seam, and we shall work together, I hope, pleasantly to-day.' The emphasis in Mrs. May's tone on 'to-day,' showed that yesterday the task was reluctantly performed, and, consequently, badly also.

'O! mother,' said Violet, 'if you would *just* let me run to the garden first, and count the buds on my China rose-bush.'

'Never mind the buds, dear child,' said her mother, 'they will all be safe till your work is finished. Come now cheerfully, get your work-bag and work with a will, and, meantime, I shall tell you a true story about a rose-bush that was quite as welcome to its owner as yours was to you on your last birthday.

'Long before I saw your face, Violet, when I was a young girl, on a visit to your aunt Emily, she took me with her one day, to see an old lady who lived in an old-fashioned house with a lovely garden, which had been a great delight to her; but now she had become rheumatic, and as age advanced she was confined to the house. Still, she would not be idle, and she kept her little sitting-room very neat, carefully dusting it every morning after breakfast. One morning when so engaged, she saw on the wood-work that skirted the basement, what looked like a little green caterpillar, about an inch above a hole in the wood-work. As there were trees growing on the house, and the windows were opened every fine day, it would not have surprised her to see a caterpillar; however, on examination, she found it was no caterpillar, but the soft delicate sucker of a rose-tree, that must have travelled from the back of the house to the front, as there was no rose-tree of that kind on the front wall; of course, she did not interfere with her little visitor, nor did she ever water it, and yet it provided for itself, grew and grew on, till, at the time I saw it, a beautiful rose-tree in full bloom, filled the window up to the top; it was literally loaded with flowers of exquisite perfume: it was a China rose.

'The old lady was very proud of her rose-tree, and said that when she could not go out to see the flowers they came in to see her. For six months every year she had flowers; and, indeed, she might well be proud of her rose-bush, for I suppose no royal palace could boast of such an ornament. Many a sharp fit of rheumatism was soothed by the friendly rose.

'Now you have worked so nicely that I will let you off ten minutes earlier this morning, that you may have time to look at your rose-bush before dinner.' R. R. T.

THE TOWER OF LONDON.

BY SARSON.

CHAPTER I.—THE BLOODY TOWER AND THE BEAUCHAMP TOWER.

WONDER if any of the readers of *Early Days* who have seen the Tower of London, or who have read so much about it in English History, have ever imagined themselves in the place of the people who once lived there.

If the old Tower could speak, it would say that a new world had grown up around it. For eight hundred years it has been famous in history, and has pleasanter associations clinging to it than those which belong to an ordinary prison. The Norman kings used to live in the part known as Cæsar's Tower. The gay gentlemen and ladies who danced and feasted there had little idea of the grim, gloomy future that awaited it. Flemish and Italian traders came thither with their curious handicraft for sale; and all round there were gardens and archery grounds, as well as what you would have liked less, the Courts of King's Bench and of Common Pleas.

If Gundulf the Weeper, who designed the

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chief parts of the Tower, had known how all that gaiety would pass away, while the rack and the block, and bolts and bars, should have their day, we could not have wondered at the tears he shed. By the time that Henry VII. came to the throne, many illustrious people had been imprisoned in the Tower, some executed, and others murdered; but he kept his royal state there, and fêted his bride, the Lady Elizabeth of York.

I do not think that any part of the Tower can be more interesting to our little readers than that called the Bloody Tower, because the two young princes, sons of Edward IV., were there put to death by order of their Uncle Richard. This building overlooks the Thames, and joins the gateway to the Inner Ward, which contained the keep, the jewel-house, the wardrobe, queen's garden, etc. It is quite possible that the poor little prisoners had many an hour of happy play together before the dismal night that Forrest and Dighton stole upon them in their innocent sleep. From their windows they could see the wharf, the river, and the bridge. Then there was a garden for them to play in, and a pleasant walk upon the wall.

The Governor, Sir John Brackenbury, was no doubt kind to them; but often must they have longed to see again their poor mother, Elizabeth Woodville, from whose arms the youngest had been torn, and who was living in retirement at the house of the Abbot of Westminster. She was a very pretty lady, with bright, rosy cheeks, and a quantity of golden hair. But not for beautiful face and pretty hair do children love their mothers. Ah, think how you would feel were you carried away from yours, and locked up among fine rooms and gardens where she might not come! When Sir John Brackenbury received orders from their uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, that he was to murder the little boys, he was very much shocked, and refused to do it. The cruel uncle wanted the crown for himself, but the governor refused to do his bidding. So Sir James Tyrrel was sent, with orders to take the keys from him, but only till the morrow. He took with him two men, Dighton and Forrest, who could in the dead of the night enter the chamber of the sleeping boys and do the dark deed. One of the murderers afterwards confessed his share in the transaction, and it is from his evidence, which we have only too much reason to believe true, that the facts are taken. It is said that the elder boy had the New Testament under his pillow. Perhaps he fell asleep thinking of some of the beautiful words that Jesus spoke about the house with 'many mansions,' or His love for the little ones. No one knew what became of the bodies, but two hundred years after, the bones of two boys were found under the old stone steps in the royal chapel. There being every reason to believe that these were the bones of Edward V. and his brother, King Charles ordered their removal to Westminster Abbey, our great burying-place of kings. They were laid in the chapel built by Henry VII.

The Beauchamp Tower is so called from Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who was imprisoned in it towards the end of the fourteenth century. Another Earl of Warwick, John Dudley, with several members of his family, were confined in the same place more than a hundred and fifty years later. One of the sons was Lord Guildford Dudley, the husband of Lady Jane Grey, whose sorrowful story is, I have no doubt, well known to my young readers.

The great offence of the Earl Beauchamp was—that he had given sound advice to a young king who did not like advice. This young king was Richard II., and no sooner had he attained his majority than he sent away a governor of whom he had long been weary. Beauchamp went to his own castle at Warwick, and was no doubt a great deal happier improving his estates, designing churches, and planting trees, than he was in trying to train into order a perverse sprig of royalty. But years after the king made him a prisoner in the Tower, on the pretext that he had exceeded the power delegated to him in the days of the minority, and had caused to be tried and executed a favourite of the king's named Simon Burley. This was quite true, but Beauchamp had acted for the best.

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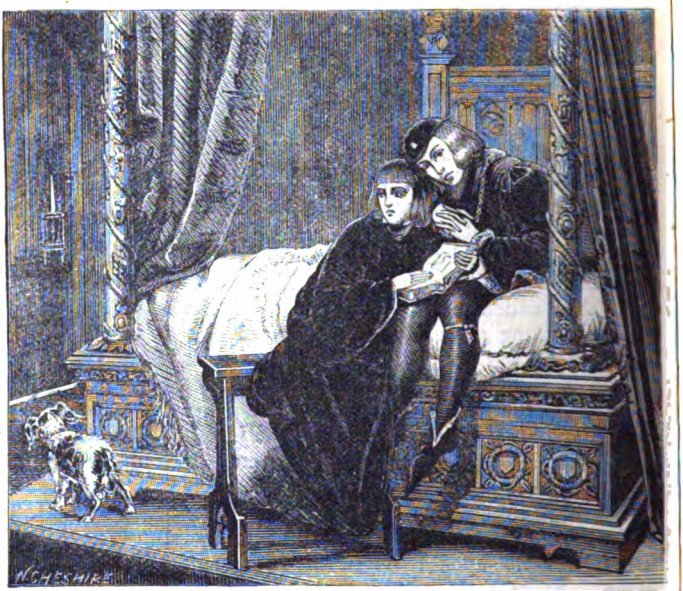
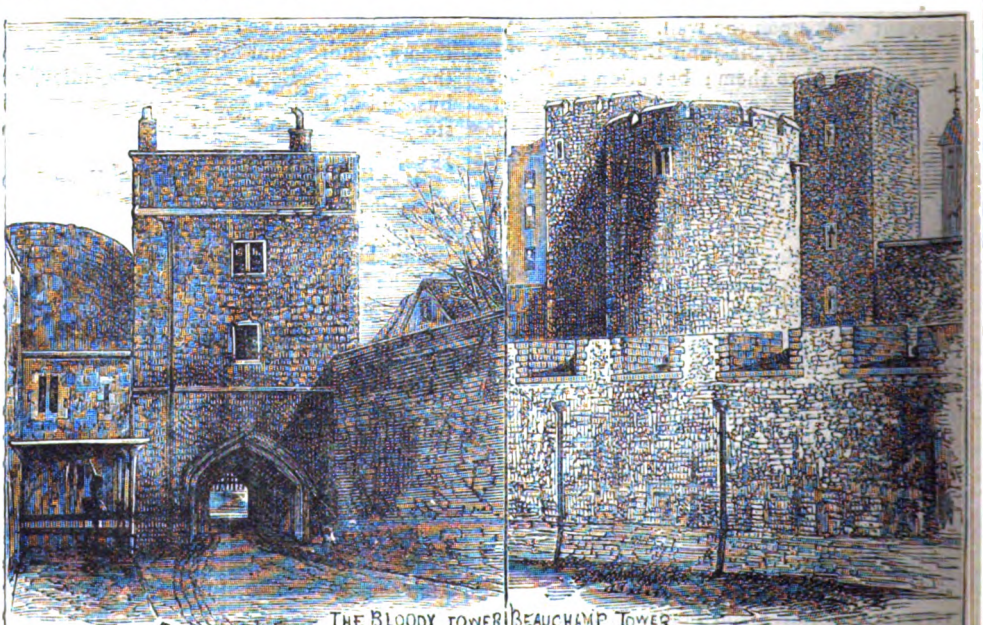
The Londoners were very indignant, as he had before received pardon for the act under the great seal. Beauchamp was sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, and his property confiscated. The king did not dare to have this cruel sentence carried out. He let him remain for some time in the Tower; and then, finding how everybody sympathized with him, he sent him away to the Isle of Man. But the Tower proved to be the safest place for him after all, and he was brought back to it, till, on the accession of Henry V., he was set at liberty, and restored to the wealth and honours of which he had been so unjustly deprived. He is buried at Warwick, in the church which he built during his retirement from Court life.



The Princes in the Tower.



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NOVEMBER, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

'In his night-dress, he looks bonnie.'

See page 162.

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THE FISHERMAN'S BABY.

THE stars are in the sky, baby,
The stars that smile and peep
At the birds in their tiny nests,
And the darling flowers asleep.

The sea-gull's screech is hushed, baby,
The daisy has gone to bed,
Its crimson-tipped curtain is drawn
Snugly round its golden head.

The waves are breaking tenderly,
And flashing in silver foam;
Baby, dada is out on the sea,
Coo him home, birdie, coo him home.

There is porridge to make for supper,
And the room to make cheery bright,
But nought can be done till the babe
Is put in his bed for the night.

In his night-dress, he looks bonnie,
O, that father could see him now!
And dance him in his big, strong arms,
And press a kiss on his brow.

Good night, good night, my baby sweet,
May the Saviour bless my child;
May the Holy make him holy,
Wash him, keep him undefiled.

NELLIE CORNWALL.

COATS OF MANY COLOURS.

'A COAT of many colours.' Of course, all readers of *Early Days* know who wore that coat. Perhaps you have often cried over its strange, sad history. But I am not going to talk about it now. I want to call your attention to coats of many a shade and shape and size, far more beautiful than any that an earthly father could give to his son; for they are the gift of the great Father of all, Who cares so kindly and wisely for the humblest of His creatures, that He has given to each clothing exactly suited to its wants.

If I were to ask a little girl why she wears bright ribbons, she would say, 'Because they look pretty;' but the butterfly, the king-fisher, and many other creatures, who wear colours far brighter than you do, if they could speak would give me a better answer than that. There is a special reason why they should wear their own colours and no other. And this is true not only of the most attractive-looking animals, birds and insects, but also of those who never appear in anything but the most Quaker-like dresses. The brown caterpillar would be miserable in the showy dress of some other members of its family. The mother-pheasant would not exchange her quiet-coloured feathers for her husband's gay ones; for, as her nest is built on the ground, where she might soon be captured whilst sitting on her eggs, her olive-brown colour is her safeguard, for it is so much like the leaves and moss amongst which she sits, that she easily escapes detection. Thus you see that colour may be a very powerful means of protection. Many a creature is saved from the notice of its enemies by its resemblance to the objects amongst which it lives. A few minutes in the fields with the grasshoppers, or by a pond where the brown frogs pop in and out amongst the water-plants, will enable you to prove this for yourself.

Perhaps some of you have visited the Zoological Gardens, and have been interested in watching the beautiful Polar bear. Did it ever occur to you to ask why a white dress was given him? There are two very good reasons for this: In the first place, white is better than any other colour for keeping out the cold; and besides, his white fur can scarcely be distinguished by his human enemies from the pure mantle of snow which is spread over the whole region where he makes his home. The wonderful little stoat of Siberia dresses in reddish-brown in the summer, when he cannot hide in the snow; but in winter his coat is changed to a beauti-

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ful white. But the poor little fellow is mistaken if he thinks that his white coat will save him from the hunter, for it is much more valuable than his summer one. Though it is very hard work to find him, no trouble is considered too great if only he can be captured, and deprived of his winter dress, which is called ermine, and is so highly esteemed that even royalty is glad to wear it.

In a cabinet at the British Museum is preserved a specimen of the strange Brazilian insect known as the 'walking leaf;' so-called from its remarkable habit of changing colour at different seasons, like the leaves amongst which it lives. Some day, perhaps, you may have an opportunity of seeing the beautiful caterpillar of the emperor moth, clothed in brilliant green with pink spots,—just the dress, you would think, to attract the attention of the insect-fancier. Yet its bright hues really screen it from observation: for it is not easy to find the little creature amongst the mass of pink heather where it crawls. Another striking illustration of protection by colour is found in the butterfly world; for the bright spots on the dark-winged moth, and the black ones on those of a lighter tint, being most easily seen, are struck at first by their enemies the birds, and the insects are thus saved from receiving a death-blow in the more tender parts of their body.

But colour is not only useful as a defence, it is sometimes a means of attack. The pink mantis of Java turns to good account his wonderful likeness to a flower very common there; for the cunning little fellow will remain perfectly still until the butterflies and insects on which he feeds fly towards him, intending to suck the honey out of him. As soon as they are fairly settled down, they are dismayed to find that what they thought was a delightful flower, opens its mouth and proceeds to make a meal of them! The gay colours of many insects and reptiles seem to act like the bright signal flags that you see on a railroad, which show that danger is near. Their brilliant coats warn birds and animals that their wearers are dangerous eating. Their taste is so disagreeable that they are very rarely molested, because if once the experiment of tasting them is tried, it is never repeated. A story is told of a certain gluttonous duck in Central America who tried to eat a tempting-looking frog, smartly attired in red and blue, but after taking him in her mouth she dropped him directly, and went about jerking her head as if to get rid of something nasty.

I think you have now heard enough about these coats of many colours to lead you to see that the great Creator distributes them with no partial hand. He has no favourite child on which He bestows His gifts at the expense of others; but each of His creatures is provided with the means of playing its little part in the great world, happily and well, for 'not one of them is forgotten before God.'

G. M. A.

THE TOWER OF LONDON.

BY SARSON.

CHAPTER II.—ST. PETER'S CHAPEL AND THE PLACE OF EXECUTION.—ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL.—THE MIDDLE AND BYWARD TOWERS.—TRAITORS' GATE.

THE first St. Peter's Church, and the White Tower and the Jewel House, were among the works of Gundulf the Weeper. Henry the Third gave the Chapel a musical chime of bells, and to St. John's Chapel in the White Tower, sculptured images of saints.

St. Peter's Chapel was rebuilt in the reign of Edward I. Just opposite the door is the Tower Green, an open space behind all the buildings named, but near the White and Beauchamp Towers. It was used as the place of execution.

Here, on the spot marked by an oval figure, Anne Boleyn, Catharine Howard, and Lady Jane Grey were beheaded. Very near it they were buried, as were also Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, the Protector, Duke of

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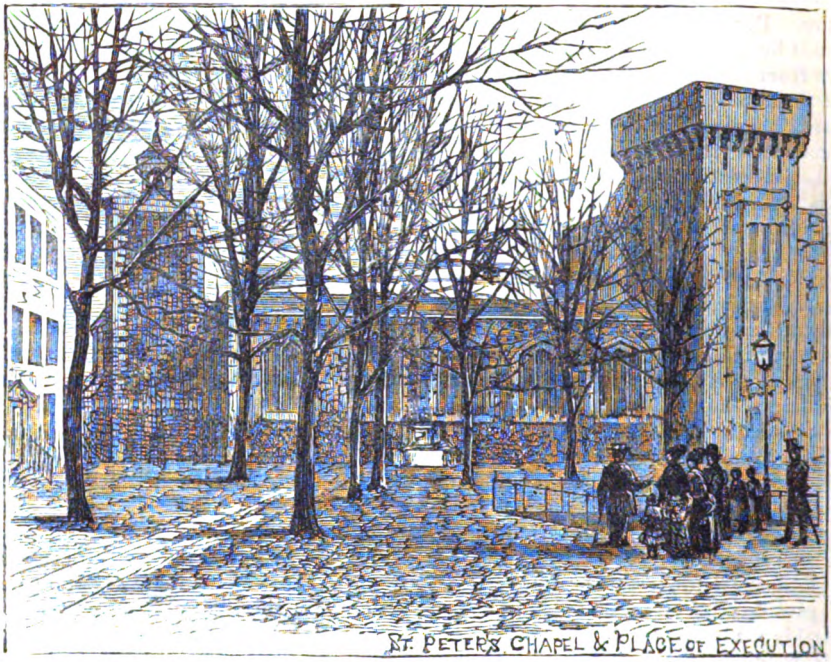

ST. PETER'S CHAPEL & PLACE OF EXECUTION

ST. PETER'S CHAPEL.—INTERIOR.

ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL.

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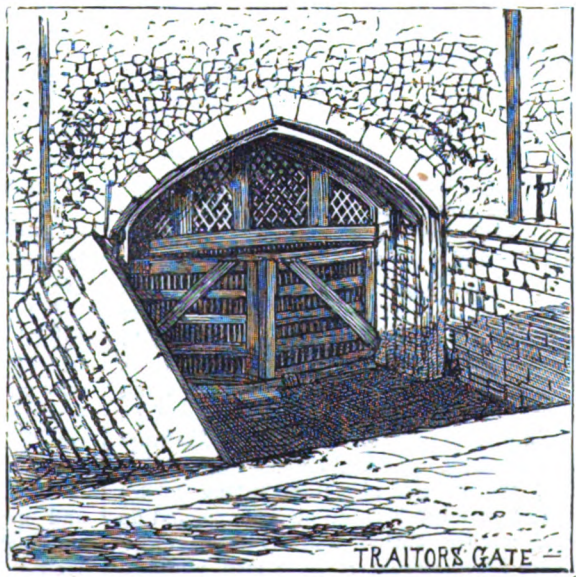
Somerset, Sir Thomas More, the Countess of Shrewsbury, the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, and some Jacobite lords.

We ought also to mention Sir John Eliot, a patriot of Charles the First's time, who contended nobly for the rights of Englishmen. King Charles sought to silence Eliot's burning eloquence by committing him to the Bloody Tower. Deprived of the power to act and to speak, the patriot prayed and wrote; but his health failed and he died.

The Middle and Byward Towers, situated close to the draw-bridge over the moat, do not need much notice. Almost beneath the Bloody Tower is a channel which used to connect the water of the Thames with that of the Tower moat; but it is now dry, and laid out with turf and shrubs. Prisoners of State were brought in here, passing under the gloomy archway of St. Thomas's Tower, which, in compliment to them, was called Traitors' Gate. But they were by no means all traitors who passed under it.

Traitors' Gate was built by Henry III., and bears evidence of his rich taste. It is said to be one of the finest arches in the world. It is not likely that the unfortunate prisoners who were drawn up to it, and who saw the Bloody Tower looming above it, were much impressed with its beauty. To Elizabeth Tudor, Queen Mary's half-sister, the place looked so dismal through a soaking rain, that she shrank from landing, and asked if she might not remain in her barge.

It was Palm Sunday, but none of the gladness of that holy day breathed through the heavy March air. No children's clear hosannas, no swelling anthem, no silver chime of bells. The chief constable and his guards, all dressed in armour, waited on the wharf to receive



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their royal charge. One can imagine the curl upon the young girl's lips as she asked,

'Are all these harnessed men for me?'

'No, Madam,' said Sir John.

'Yea, but I know it is so,' and she sprang on shore.

Then, on the very stones where her mother, Anne Boleyn, had knelt and called on God as witness of her innocence, did Elizabeth stand and proclaim herself a true subject, though an imprisoned one.

Sir John Gage proved a hard warder, never allowing her the least indulgence. He thought of that when she was queen, being afraid of her resentment; but the queen only showed it by telling him that if ever she had a prisoner whom she wished to be treated with more than ordinary severity, she would be sure to commit him to his care.

Ah! many breaking hearts have passed through Traitors' Gate, many whose sorrow was the sad fruit of their sin; but there have been many also whose wounds God has bound up, whose tears He has for ever wiped away. These have witnessed, as we all hope to do, that,—

'Christ leads us through no darker rooms
Than He went through before.'

MAGGIE'S TEMPTATION.

ONE clear cold night a few weeks before Christmas, two lonely little children might have been seen in the busy city of B——, walking down the quiet avenue in front of the cathedral. They had nearly reached the end of the avenue when the little girl turned to her brother and said with a bitter sob, 'O Robbie, I am so cold, my fingers feel almost frozen, and I'm most famished with hunger! Mother used to tell us always to trust in God, but did she know we should be wandering about like this—half-starved, and nearly Christmas time?' And as she finished, the hot tears streamed down the little thin face. 'Now Maggie, dear, don't talk like that,' said her brother, a bright-looking boy of thirteen; 'I know it is very hard on us just now; but we often hadn't enough to eat when mother was alive, and *she* never doubted but that God would give us food, and you know He always did; so cheer up, Mag,' he added in a cheery tone, though the big tears sprang to his eyes; 'we must keep up our courage and do what mother always did,—trust in God.' Before Maggie could reply, a man, wrapped up in a rough great-coat, strode past them, his hands jingling the loose money in his pockets, while he loudly whistled some merry tune. He had only just gone out of sight, when Robbie's quick eyes caught the glitter of something bright lying close by the lamp-post; he darted forward, and soon returned with a bright new half-crown in his hand. Maggie's sorrowful face lit up at the sight of the money. 'O Rob,' she said eagerly, 'how lucky! now we shall be able to get something to eat and some place to lodge in.'

'But Maggie,' said Robbie in a low tone, which contrasted strangely with his sister's eager accents, 'do you think it would be right to keep it? It must belong to that man who passed us just now; and if it does we ought to run after him and give it back at once.'

Maggie's face fell. 'It *may* not be his,' she said; 'we don't know it is for certain, and if it does belong to him, I'm sure we want it ever so much more than he does.'

'O hush, Maggie dear,' said Robbie in a pained voice; 'how grieved mother would be to hear you talking like that! Come, it ain't ours, Maggie, so take my hand and let's run after him, he can't have gone far yet; we shall be sure to catch him if we run fast.'

So hand in hand the children set off to run, and never stopped till they reached the thoroughfare beyond. But here they could see no sign of the stranger.

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'He couldn't have got farther than this yet,' said Robbie in a perplexed voice, as they reached the middle of the street. Maggie did not reply; in her heart she did not want to find the man and restore the precious half-crown. They were standing before a cook-shop, the window of which looked very tempting with its joints of meat, and the savoury odour proceeding from within tantalized poor Maggie's nose almost beyond endurance. Enviously she peeped through the open door into the land of plenty, and caught a glimpse of a warm, brightly-lit room beyond. At the very first glance she started, and drew her head quickly away. The red colour rushed into her blue cheeks—for there, seated at a comfortable supper, was the man Robbie was so anxiously looking for. She recognized him at a glance; she had had a good look at him in the avenue a few minutes before, and had then particularly noticed the little gold rings, such as sailors sometimes wear, which were now shining in his ears. Besides, he had the same big bushy whiskers and rough sailor's coat; there could be no doubt about it, it was the self-same man. She glanced anxiously at Robbie. No, he had evidently not seen him, for he was still looking eagerly up and down the street. Should she tell him? If she didn't, they could spend the half-crown on themselves, for Robbie would surely not refuse to use it if he could not find the owner. It was a terrible temptation for the poor little half-starved girl, with the delicious fumes of the hot supper within still floating under her nose. If she didn't tell, they could have a hot supper too—a real hot supper! Maggie closed her eyes in sheer ecstasy at the thought. She was roused by hearing Robbie say, 'Come, Mag, I can't see him anywhere here, let's go a bit farther down the street.'

Maggie's heart beat fast. He was going away from the very place where the man was, he would never find him now. She followed her brother a few steps, then suddenly stopped: 'What would her mother think if she knew?' This was the first thought that flashed across her mind,—then, more solemn still, 'What would God think?' that kind Heavenly Father Who at the bottom of her poor, ignorant, childish heart she really loved. That last thought decided her. 'Robbie,' she cried with a half-sob, for the temptation had been sore, 'come back, the man you are looking for is in there,' pointing to the open door of the cook-shop; 'I saw him there only a minute ago.' Robbie turned back in an instant. 'You don't say so, Mag; so near us, after all. Well, let us take it to him at once.' And Robbie entered the shop without once noticing his sister's choked voice, or the tears now fast running down her face. But God saw it all.

(To be concluded.)

CLEVER ROVER AND HEEDLESS BOB.

Rover was certainly a clever dog, but Bob, his master, was a very careless fellow. One fine sunshiny day, Bob and Rover were sent off to fetch a flock of sheep from Farmer Griffith's high pasture-ground to a field called River Green. Bob carried their dinner on a long stick over his shoulder. The day was hot, and the heedless young shepherd threw himself down to rest under an oak-tree and soon fell asleep. But Rover could not rest; although only a dog, he was wiser as well as older than his young master. He anxiously eyed the sleeper for some time, and showed, by his restless movements, how anxious he was to be off. At last, seeing Bob did not stir, the dog seized on the bundle and stick, and trotted off to the high pasture, where he had often been before. When his master awoke from his unlawful slumber, Rover and the bundle were both gone. Much puzzled and a little ashamed of himself, he hastily betook himself to his post of duty. Here he found Rover, still panting from his exertions, doing double duty. He was keeping watch over the missing dinner as well as the neglected sheep. The faithful old doggie taught Bob a lesson he did not soon forget.

AID.

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Rover keeping watch.

See page 167.

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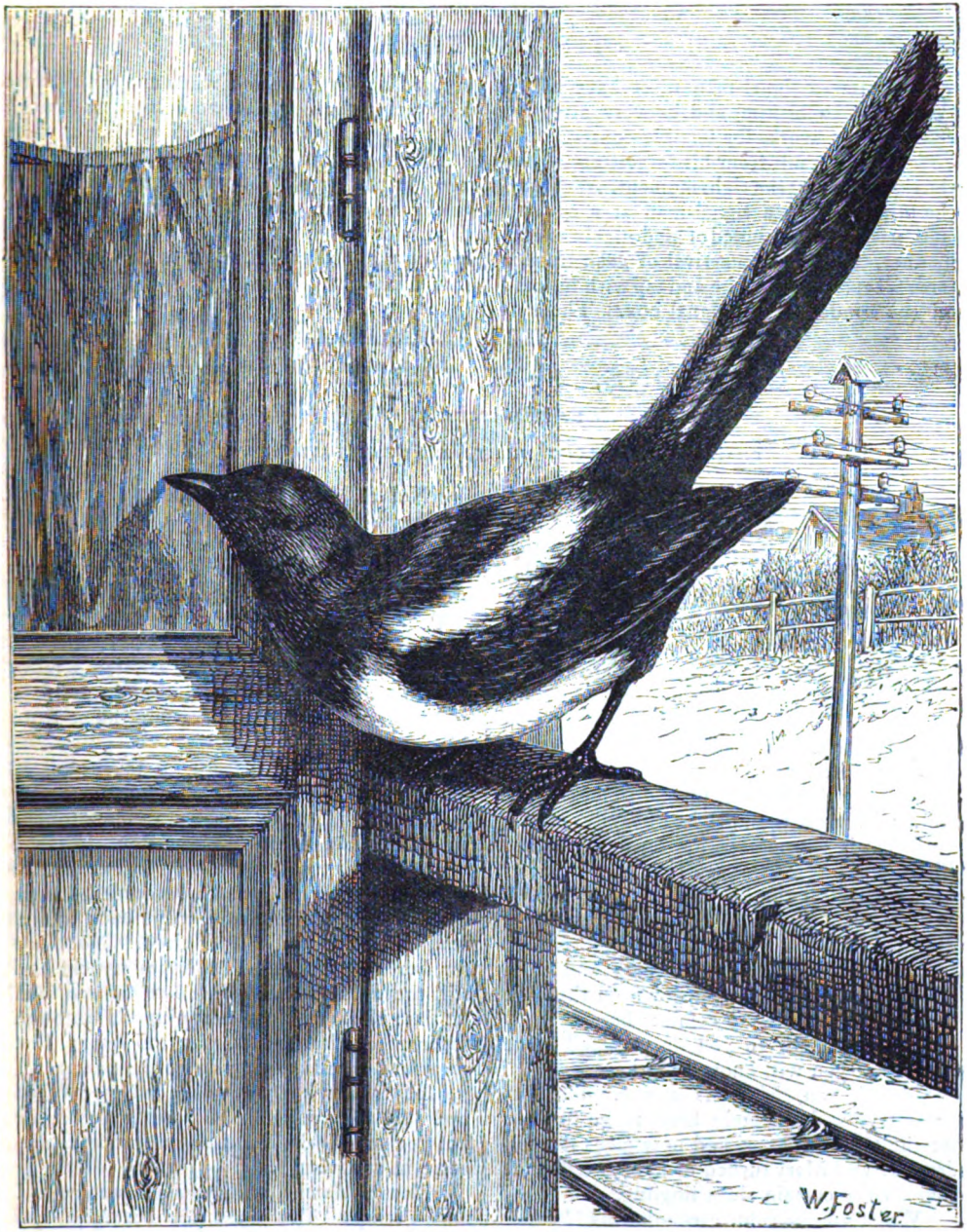

Train time.

See page 170.

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TRAIN TIME.

A RAILWAY signal-man must have all his wits about him, and be very attentive to his work, for terrible consequences might result from his forgetting to give the right signal at the right moment. We heard the other day of a signal-man at a country station who was reminded of his duties in a novel manner. Before the arrival of each train, a tame magpie would come and tap with his beak on the window of the signal-box. The bird seemed highly delighted when the man came out to ring the bell, and would wait to watch the train pass, and then fly off to his quarters at a cottage a little distance from the station. He was perfectly at liberty to fly anywhere else if he chose, as his wings had never been clipt, but he did not choose; the faithful bird was as constant at his post as the signal-man himself.

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

BY MRS. COSSLETT.

CHAPTER XI.—A LONG NIGHT, AND WHAT FOLLOWED IT.

THE little girls were almost too tired and excited to sleep that night, but each lay quiet for fear of disturbing the others, till Mary and Louie succeeded in turning pretence into reality. Fleda's head ached dreadfully, and the events of the past few weeks *would* march before her in dreary procession, till she was wearied with recollecting them. About one o'clock Louie woke with a start, and sighed heavily.

'What is the matter, darling?' whispered Fleda, almost starting at the sound of her own voice after the long stillness.

'Are you awake? O, I've had such a dreadful dream, Fleda! I'm so frightened.'

'Poor little pussy! I'll come and hold your hand,' and Fleda sat down on the edge of Louie's little bed to comfort her.

'I mustn't talk to you or we shall wake Mary, but you will know I am here.'

'Thank you, Mary is awake. She has been trying desperately hard to go to sleep for the last half hour, and now gives it up in despair,' and Mary turned over with a flounce that set the curtain rings jingling.

'Won't you be cold, Fleda darling?' asked Louie after a few moments.

'Not at all; I'm quite hot. I think it's stifling to-night.'

'I say! do tell us a tale and talk us to sleep, like a good-natured Flidkins, as you are,' suggested Mary.

Poor Fleda! The only one who had not had a wink of sleep yet, and feeling so poorly and sad, how could she tell a tale? But she did want to be kind and unselfish, and it was so nice to get a compliment from Mary.

'I'm afraid I am hardly up to the mark, but I'll try.'

So Fleda told a tale in the most monotonous voice, without a bit of expression. As she ceased, the regular breathing of her sisters convinced her that she had succeeded in her labour of love, and Fleda crept back to her bed, thoroughly cold and tired. No sleep for her that night. The hours struck, and still the active brain refused to be soothed. At last she was just dropping off through sheer exhaustion, but it was too late. The great bell went clanging down the passages.

'It's time to get up, young ladies. Wake up! O, you are awake, Miss Fleda! How hot you look,' was Martha's salutation as she came in at seven.'

'Please, Martha, will you ask auntie if I need get up? I've got a sick headache, and I haven't been to sleep all night.'

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'I'll go to Miss Hatherleigh and tell her you've had a bad night, but as to never going to sleep at all, that's nonsense. You never saw the whole of a night yet, I know.'

So saying, Martha left the room, and in a few minutes auntie came, in her dressing-gown, and bent over the flushed face.

'Crying! Why, Fleda, that is not like you; you will make your head so much worse. What are you crying for?'

'Because Martha did not believe me!' was the answer, with a burst of hysteric sobs.

'This is more than a sick headache,' thought Miss Hatherleigh; but she spoke quietly and firmly: 'My child, this is foolish. *I* believe my darling, and so will Martha. She only thought you were mistaken; she did not accuse you of untruth. Calm yourself, dear, and I will see about your having something for your head.'

On leaving the room she sent a message to the doctor.

'Her brain is in a very excited state,' said Dr. Clark to Mrs. Clifton as they left the room. 'If she were a grown-up person I should say she had "something on her mind;" but, of course, that would be absurd in the case of a child.'

'Of course,' assented Mrs. Clifton, who had been a very quiet child herself, and did not suspect half that her children did and suffered.

'She got very wet yesterday,' suggested Mrs. Clifton.

'That may account for it, then. At all events, she must be kept quiet now.'

For the next few days Fleda was very poorly. Her brothers and sisters tip-toed into the room to see her; and Mary, in a moment of remorse and anxiety, offered her back the trowel, but Fleda refused it with a sigh.

Mary and Louie were really glad when Fleda was allowed to come out once more. She felt rather trembling and dizzy, so she took hold of their arms, and walked slowly up and down for a short time. The boys, after welcoming her cordially, had gone off to a more active employment, and Fleda enquired what they were so busy about.

'They are planting potatoes,' answered Mary. 'That tiresome Hogg has bought half a load of detestable ones; but papa says we must not have any more till they are gone, so we are helping them off by planting some.

'It's not worth while to begin this lot before dinner, Dick,' said Alfred as he straightened his aching back. 'I'll just put the trowel in ready, and then we'll put these empty boxes back into the arbour.'

As they returned to their task in the afternoon they found Park waiting for them. A little conversation with him revealed the fact that the potatoes they had been planting were a worthless lot; and so when Park turned away, the two lads sat down on a log to consider what they had best do with the remainder.

'Let's get rid of them somehow; it would be beyond a joke to take them back into the house and eat them,' began Alfred.

'We might bury them in the canister?' said Dick.

'It would be a shame to spoil it.'

'It's mine, and I don't care for it; I have three canisters. I shouldn't mind kicking it into the pond.' Suiting the action to the word he gave it a kick, perhaps harder than he intended, and the thing rolled down the bank into the water with a great splash.

'Well, that's settled,' remarked Alfred. 'Let's join the fellows in the play-ground.'

THE COCKATOO.

PRETTY Poll is a favourite with most little folks; whether she is really beautiful, or only a common grey bird, she is always taught to call herself 'pretty.' I suppose you like her because she so easily acquires the accomplishment which you excel in perhaps more than any other,—the power to chatter and talk without stopping. Her cousin, the cockatoo, however, though often much prettier, is not such an entertaining bird. Except its own cry of 'Cockatoo,' from which it takes its name, it seldom utters any

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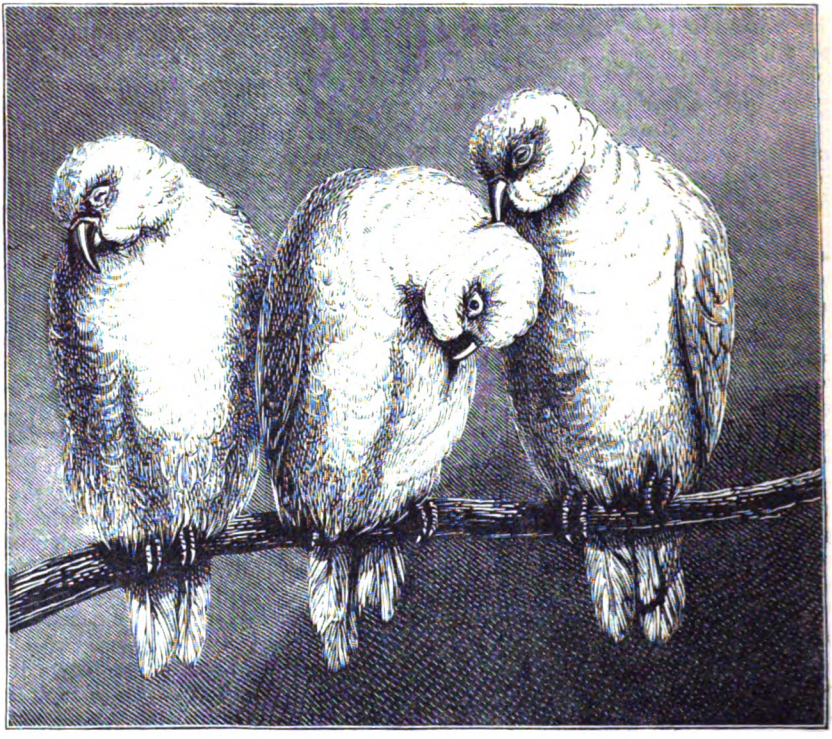

sounds that we can call words. Those of our young friends who have visited the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, will remember what an interesting sight these singular-looking birds presented. Some of them all white, tuft and all; and others with the tuft of feathers on the head, which is the great distinguishing mark of the cockatoo, tinged with light yellow, while the same colour appeared on the lower tail-feathers; that species is called the sulphur-crested cockatoo. Others had a bright rose-coloured crest. These, though perhaps the prettiest, are the least intelligent of all, and are fond of assuming all sorts of ridiculous postures, like some other pretty silly creatures I could mention, who have more beauty than sense. One very uncommon species is found in New Holland, which is all black, except its rose-coloured crest. The other kinds are found chiefly in Australia and the East Indies. They build their nests, as parrots do, in old hollow trees, and the young birds are easily caught and tamed.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

VIII.—SHIPWRECK OF ST. PAUL.

'We have two more Pictures about Paul,' said Aunt Kate on the next wet Sunday evening. 'You remember that we left him before Agrippa and Festus.'

'Did they punish him for preaching Jesus?' asked Willie.

'The Jews wished them to do so; but Katie will tell us why they could not.'

'Because Paul wanted to be tried by the

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Roman Emperor,' said Katie; 'so he was sent to Rome. It was on his way there that he was shipwrecked, wasn't it, auntie?'

'Yes; the account of their stormy voyage is given in the twenty-seventh chapter of Acts. We will read it verse by verse.

'What does it mean by saying that sailing was dangerous because the fast was past?' asked Willie, stopping at the ninth verse.

'It refers to the Great Day of Atonement, which was celebrated in the autumn, when, you know, the wind is always very strong. As the gales had set in, they knew there was no hope of reaching Rome until the spring, but the captain wished to get as far as Phœnice, which was a better harbour than the Fair Havens.'

'They were more uncomfortable when they were in the water than they would have been at Fair Havens,' observed Willie.

'Yes; but when people have set their heart on anything, they often act as if they could avoid danger and difficulty by not thinking about them; just as the silly ostrich fancies it is safe when it hides its head in the sand that it may not see the hunter. So these people agreed that Paul's caution was very foolish. Read on, and see how they were led to change their minds.'

'They would have lost all hope if it had not been for Paul,' said Pollie.

'How sorry they must have been that they had not taken his advice. I should think they would remember another time that prevention is better than cure,' remarked Katie.

'They would have been lost if Paul had not been in the ship, I suppose,' said Willie.

'We can't be sure about that; but we know that God wanted Paul for a special purpose, and that he could not die until it was accom-

The Shipwreck.

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plished. His words remind me of a story told of Julius Cæsar, who, in a terrible storm, exclaimed that the ship which carried Cæsar and his fortunes could not sink. Yet there is a great difference between his thought and Paul's; you know what I mean?'

'Cæsar spoke as if his presence made the ship safe, and Paul said it was God Who was taking care of him and the others,' said Katie.

'But could not God have saved Paul by himself?' asked Willie.

'Undoubtedly; but He heard His servant's prayer for the safety of the others.'

'What cowards the sailors were to try to run away in the boat,' said Willie, indignantly. 'I am glad Paul caught them. I suppose the others cut the ropes so that they might not run off again.'

'But would it matter about the sailors, when God had said they should all be saved?' asked Pollie.

'God had promised His blessing upon their efforts, but He would work no miracle to save them from the results of their own cowardice or laziness. Your question reminds me of an Arab fable, which tells how a man in the desert had alighted from his camel that he might kneel in prayer, and began by asking that his camel might not escape whilst its master was engaged in devotion. He was answered by a voice which bade him first tie up his camel and then kneel down to pray.'

'How calm Paul was all the time,' said Katie. 'He always seemed to know what was the best thing to do.'

'"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." God's servants, in time of danger, are generally remarkable for what is called presence of mind.'

'It was a narrow escape,' said Willie, when they had finished the chapter. 'May we read what happened when they got to land.'

'Just a few more verses before papa comes.'

'Where is Melita?' asked Willie.

'It is the old name for Malta, which is a beautiful island in the Mediterranean, and now belongs to Britain. The fine bay where the shipwreck is thought to have occurred, still bears the name of Paul's Bay.'

'I suppose the people were savages there, as they are called barbarians,' said Katie.

'It was the custom then to call all nations barbarians who were not Greeks or Romans. It is probable that these Maltese were not wholly uncivilized. Now let us read to the end of the sixth verse.'

'I wonder how the viper came there,' said Pollie.

'I expect it had been brought in with the sticks. It was most likely asleep from the cold, but the warmth of the fire awoke it.'

'It would not have proved that Paul was a bad man if the bite had killed him,' said Willie.

'No; but in those days any sudden or heavy calamity was thought to indicate that God was angry with the sufferer. It is a very wrong and foolish notion, but it is not very uncommon even in our own day.'

'Now I want you to think what good effects were produced by Paul's remaining unhurt after the viper's bite.'

'It would make the people more willing to hear him preach the Gospel,' said Willie, promptly.

'It would teach the islanders how God could protect His servant,' said Katie; 'and it was the third time the people in the ship had seen him delivered: once from the sea, then from the soldiers when they talked of killing him, and now from the viper.'

'You are quite right. Paul had good reason to expect that the viper would not injure him. Do you know why?'

The children looked puzzled, so Aunt Kate said, 'Turn to the sixteenth chapter of

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Mark, and you will see. I will read part of the 17th and 18th verses:—"And these signs shall follow them that believe:...they shall take up serpents."'

'But good people now are not always safe from sudden accidents,' said Willie.

'Perhaps because they have not ready, victorious faith; some think because the age of miracles has passed away; but we might find many illustrations in the journals of missionaries of our own day, of God's special Providence saving His messengers from serpents and other evils more dreadful still. But here comes papa.'

THE SILLY MOTH.

BY MRS. H. C. GARDNER.

It flew into my window one pleasant night in June,
A silly, heedless miller with broad and dusty wings;
It paused upon the casement to glance around the room,
And spy out all the curious, the bright and pretty things.

Upon the walls were pictures, brackets, and tinted shells;
My wide-awake canary swung in his gilded cage;
My plants were full of blossoms, of fragrant cups and bells,
My bookshelves bore rich treasure in many a storied page.

But none of these attracted that silly, thoughtless moth,
He only saw the lamp with its dazzling sphere of light;
And from his sheltered corner he darted, nothing loth,
To reach the glowing vision, so beautiful and bright.

At first he circled round it, then, with a sudden turn,
He struck the heated crystal and from the danger flew;
But straightway back returning, he managed now to burn
The down upon his dusty wings and singe his whiskers too.

Though badly scorched and crippled once more the insect came,
For still the light enchanted and turned his empty head;
Again with reckless folly he rushed into the flame,
And with a sudden whiz and crisp the silly moth fell dead.

So do we see boys gather outside the gay saloon,
Where grown-up men assemble to drink the sparkling wine,
Until they enter, just like my moth in June,
Unheeding all the perils beneath the show so fine.

At first they taste the wine cup, but soon they drain the bowl,
And then the swearer's fearful oaths are spoken without dread;
And so by quick degrees is wrought the ruin of the soul,
And promising young manhood lies low among the dead.

O, foolish moths! to linger around the candle's glare,
To pass untouched the sweeter gifts that God has freely given;
To blindly lose the healthful joys that all the world may share;
To risk their happiness on earth and all their hopes of heaven.

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Paul and the Viper.

See page 174.

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DECEMBER, 1878. Price One Penny.

EARLY DAYS

'The Postman's Coming!'

See page 178.

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THE CHRISTMAS POSTMAN.

It was Christmas-eve; the short winter daylight had faded away, and the night was dark and cold. The snow fell noiselessly in softest flakes, fast covering up every little blade of grass, and making a white carpet for the road. The winter wind blew around the bare trees, but found no leaves to rustle there; then it whistled down one chimney, and sent the smoke down another. In through chinks and crazy doors it made its way, making poor folks wrap their scanty garments more closely around them, while the rich hurried home to warm fires and cosy rooms out of the way of the mischievous wind. It met the postman coming down a street with a large bundle of letters and Christmas-cards and nice presents; and it tried hard to blow out his lantern as it hurried past him in a great gust. But the postman was a brave man and did not mind the wind. He knew well enough that many little girls and boys were eagerly expecting the Christmas-cards he carried: for as he passed the houses he could see the little faces watching for him; and when he gave his loud knock at the doors he could hear a scampering of little feet inside; and the sight of the children's glowing faces and the sound of their warm thanks pleased him so much that, kind man as he was, he did not mind the snow or the cold.

It was almost too dark to see anything out of doors, but a little boy's face, pinched and wan, peered anxiously out of the window of a poor little house in a back street. 'Mother,' he cried, 'the postman's coming! I see him at the top of the street;' and the mother hastened to the window and stood beside her boy. They did not speak, their hearts were too full, but painful suspense was written in each face. Presently the postman came to the next door—now was the moment—would he come to their house or would he pass? 'Yes, mother, he is coming' and the boy started up, 'no—he has passed!' And bursting into tears the poor little boy laid his head on his mother's lap. She tenderly smoothed his hair, and in a voice struggling hard to be calm, said, 'My son, our Father in heaven will not leave us desolate, He will provide something for us.' And kneeling quietly down beside her weeping boy she commended her cause to God. The wind wailed around the house that night, and there was no fire and no food for the widow and her child that Christmas-eve.

The postman passed on, and came at last into a square surrounded with fine houses, lit up by the blaze of warm fires and bright candles within, while glimpses through the window-blinds revealed a wealth of holly and evergreen decorating parlour and hall. 'No. 10,' said the postman to himself, 'three letters for No. 10;' and going up the steps he gave a loud knock. Three little girls came to meet him. The eldest was about twelve years of age, the other two were younger. They were much delighted to have a letter each, and when the postman had gone, they tripped into the cheery parlour to open them. 'How pretty!' said Maude, the eldest, as she held up to view an exquisite card which a kind aunt had sent. 'And look at mine,' exclaimed the youngest, with great delight. 'Lucy, what is yours like?' But Lucy looked rather disappointed. 'Why, it's not a Christmas-card at all, only a lot of stamps from Uncle John, who says I must try and use them to make some one happy this Christmas-tide,' said Lucy. 'I suppose he means they must be turned into money.' 'That's just like Uncle John,' exclaimed the two girls; 'but how much is it?' Lucy counted them and found five shillingsworth. When their mother was told, she tried to impress upon her little daughter that it would make her far happier to give it to the poor, than if she spent it on herself, especially if some person could have a nice Christmas dinner through her kindness. So they all sat down by the fire to think of some one to

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whom it could be given. At last little May, the youngest, softly whispered, 'Mamma, do you remember that poor little boy whose father died in the hospital a week or two ago? He looked so good, Mamma, though he was very poor; I wonder where he lives, and whether he will have a Christmas dinner?' 'Poor little boy, I remember him,' said Mamma; 'he said he lived in C—— Street.' 'Then let us go to-morrow morning and give it him,' the little girls all exclaimed. 'Do let Ann go out and buy some beef to-night, and won't he be delighted, Mamma;' and little heads, quietly resting on soft pillows, dreamt pleasant dreams that night of good deeds to be done.

It was Christmas morning; clear on the frosty air came the sound of Christmas bells ringing out in joyous cadence, 'On earth peace, good will toward men.' A tap at the widow's door, and three little girls entered, laden with parcels of good things. The poor woman and her little boy, overcome with gratitude, knew not how to thank them, and when all was explained, a deep well-spring of thankfulness to God sprung up in the widow's heart at the thought that though the letter enclosing the money she had expected did not come, God sent a letter by the Christmas postman to another home which had been the means, through His Providence, of supplying her and her child with the Christmas dinner she had feared they must go without. Lucy found out a great secret that day: that the way to be happy oneself is to make others happy; and often with pleasure did she look back on the letter the postman brought her that Christmas-eve.

THE STORY OF THE GOOD QUEEN AIMÉE.

NCE upon a time, the country of Freeland was governed by a queen so good and gentle, wise and loving, that in the hearts of her subjects she was known as the good queen 'Aimée,' and her dominions reached from the river that flowed beside her palace to the very ends of the earth; so that she had pearls from the east, spices from the west, fruits from the south, and furs from the north.

Now, good Queen Aimée was not only happy in her people, but also in her own family, for God gave her a great and good prince to be her husband, and several lovely and loving children. But at length God, Who loved her, laid His afflicting hand upon her, and she was called to stand by the death-bed of her beloved mother and see her pass away to the world of spirits. Queen Aimée was very sad, and she put away her purple raiment and put on robes of mourning, and she wept bitterly. But in the time of her sorrow the Lord, 'the Comforter,' showed the queen that her good mother should rise again, for that those who 'sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him.'

But one Christmas time, God in mercy laid His afflicting hand upon the queen, and upon the good prince her husband, saying to that great and good man, '*Come up higher;*' 'where I am, there shall also My servant be.' And, behold, the good Queen Aimée kept the feast a weeping widow! and instead of decking the Christmas-tree for her children in company with their royal father, she and they twined the dark early violets into wreaths and chaplets, and bedewed them with their tears, and laid their perfumed offerings on the tomb of their loved and lost one. But she did not mourn in selfish forgetfulness of her loyal Freelanders, but opened her heart afresh to the sad and sorrowful, and wept, tear for tear, with the widows of Freeland. And daily she grew in the favour of God and the love of her people, till '*God save the Queen*' became a nursery hymn in her kingdom.

And another Christmas-tide drew near, and the queen kept it soberly and solemnly amongst her royal children, at her beautiful quiet home by the sea; but the voice of mirth was not heard there, and the tears of the queen flowed afresh.

Now, the people of Freeland sorrowed for their good queen, and they said one to another, 'O that our queen would come amongst us once more as of old, and let us sun

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ourselves in her royal smile!' and they prayed to God to comfort her heart, and they said, 'Lord, dry her tears, and make her to rejoice again; for is she not our queen?'

And the queen heard the lamentations of her people, and she said in her heart, 'I will go forth once more amongst my loving people, but I will go to the house of mourning, and not to the house of mirth;' and she went in her garb of widowhood, and paid visits of sympathy and consolation to her sick and dying soldiers, and her old warriors wept with joy and gratitude.

And another Christmas drew nigh, and Queen Aimée said to her children, 'I must do something this Christmas for my little sick

subjects in the children's hospital—what shall I do for them?' and the queen's children remembered that when they were little ones their hearts danced for joy at the sight of the Christmas-tree, and they said to their royal mother, 'How happy the little sick children would be if we sent them nice new toys.' Very soon a wagon was at the gate of the children's hospital; and when the bell was rung, the porter appeared, and the messenger said, '*From the queen!*' and the porter carried the message to the matron, '*From the queen!*' and the matron told the nurses, '*From the queen!*' and the nurses carried in the three great Christmas boxes, and as they opened them before the eyes of the feeble little ones the nurses said, '*From the queen!*' and the children's eyes danced with joy, and they cried out, '*God save the queen!*'

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There were toys of all sorts,—dolls for the girls, balls for the boys, picture-books and games for all,—to make a merry Christmas even within the walls of an hospital. And the children rejoiced together, and they said, 'What shall we do for our good Queen Aimée?' and some of the children who had been taught by godly mothers at home, said, 'We will pray for our good queen, that if sickness should come upon her, God may comfort her as she has comforted us;' and many a weak little voice joined in that Christmas-eve chorus,—

'Long live our noble queen,
God save the queen!'

Now, although the name of the queen in the hearts of her subjects was *Aimée*, or *Well-beloved*, she had another name by which she was known in the world, that signified *Conqueror;* and I think all her subjects should pray that their own good Queen may be more than conqueror through Him Who loved her, and Who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

I think you will all have found out the other name of the good queen.

THE SONG OF THE HOSPITAL CHILDREN.

Poor weak little ones were we,
Dreaming of the Christmas-tree;
Dreaming it was fine to see
Children dance round merrily;
Till in sleep we felt that pain
Said, 'You'll never dance again.'

Then we wept for mother's hand,
For her smile, so soft and bland,
Smile to chase our tears away,
Kisses better far than play;
But our mothers were at home!
Far from us, they could not come!

As we wept our hapless fate,
Lo! *a wagon at the gate!*
Such a wagon ne'er was seen,
Full of toys from our good queen!
Toys for us; so weak and sad,
All to make us bright and glad.

Good Queen Aimée! we shall pray
For our queen both night and day;
When at night we lie awake,
To our God our prayers we'll make,
That when she is sick or sad,
God Himself may make her glad.

R. R. T.

WET SUNDAYS AT HILL FARM.

IX.—THE HOLY CHILD JESUS.

'I WONDER what the Lord Jesus really did when He was a Child,' said Willie, one Sunday evening just before Christmas-day.

'So do I,' said Katie; 'and I wish the Bible had told us more about Him; whether He went to school or not; whether He ever played, or whether He was always quiet and thoughtful.'

'A good many people have felt the same wish,' Aunt Kate answered; 'but as God has not seen fit to tell us more, we may be sure there is some very good reason why we should not have our curiosity gratified. Still, we do know something about the childhood of our Lord, and the few notices we have teach us a great deal.'

'He didn't go to school, I suppose,' Katie said: 'because the Jews asked, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John vii. 15).'

'Did Jesus never learn His letters?' asked Pollie, with some surprise.

'Well, the Jews didn't mean that Jesus had never learned the alphabet,' Aunt Kate said; 'but that He had not been taught in any of the schools of the Rabbis; and they were surprised, not at His being able to read, but at His knowing so much about the Scriptures. Whether He went to school at Nazareth or not I can't say, for the Bible tells us nothing about it.'

'At any rate, I suppose He used to help Joseph at his work,' Willie said; 'and that proves that He must have been something like other boys.'

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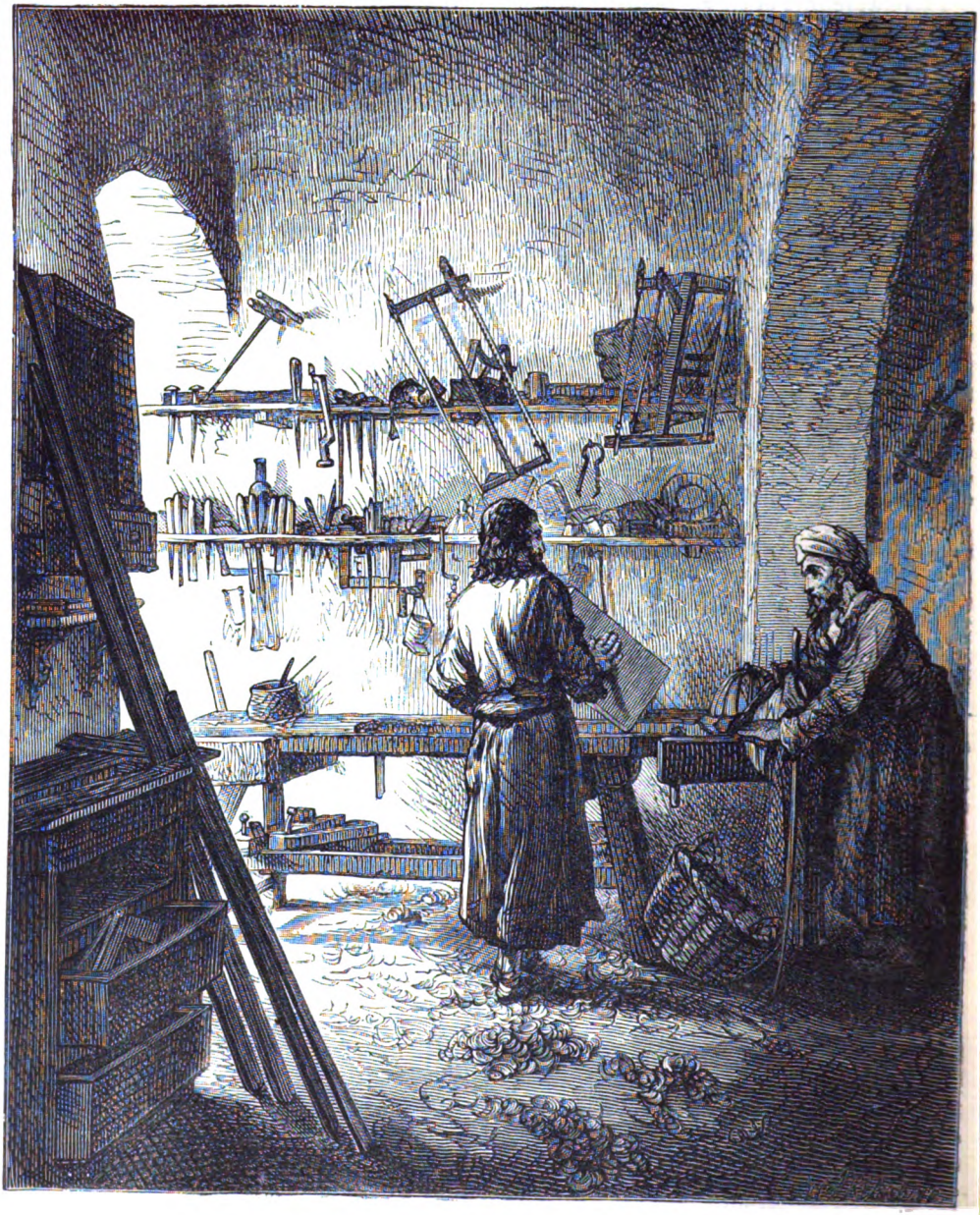

Carpenter's Shop at Nazareth. *See page* 183.

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See page 184.

'I've no doubt that in a great many ways the Lord was like other boys, only we can never think of His being idle, or disobedient, or anything else wrong. Very likely he did work at Joseph's trade, for the people called Him the carpenter's son; and St. Mark tells us that once they asked, "Is not this the Carpenter?"'

'Is that a picture of the shop He used to work in,' Pollie enquired.

'Not of the shop our Saviour worked in, because nobody knows exactly where that was; but it is a picture copied from a drawing made at Nazareth of a carpenter's shop there, and I dare say Joseph's shop was something like it.'

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'It doesn't look much like our shops,' said Willie; 'more like one of Robinson Crusoe's caves.'

'Yes, it appears to be in a cave, and a very convenient one too. In the other picture the carpenter seems to be at work just outside his house, and his little boy is watching him, as perhaps the Holy Child watched Joseph making boxes and sawing planks in Nazareth more than eighteen hundred years ago.'

'And don't we know anything else about the Lord when He was a child?' asked Pollie.

'Yes, there is another text, which surely you will remember, that tells us what He did after Mary had found Him disputing with the doctors in the temple.'

'He went home with Mary and Joseph, and did what they told Him,' Willie said.

Katie had found the place in St. Luke, and read, 'And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.'

'And so,' said Aunt Kate, 'though we know hardly anything else about the Lord's childhood, we do know that He was always obedient and gentle, setting an example to the boys and girls of Nazareth, and not only to them, but to all children in all parts of the world.'

'I don't wonder that everybody loved Jesus when He was a child,' said Willie; 'for He must have been so good. But then it was easy for Him to be good, and it's very hard for us.'

'Yes; but, Willie, you know that He Who was once a child, and had to pass through all the temptations of childhood, knows how hard it is for you to be good, and if you ask Him, He will help you, so that you may be like Him, and as you grow bigger and wiser you may also increase "in favour with God and man." And as we think of the Saviour at this happy Christmas-time, let us remember why He was born into this world, and lived and died for us. It was to make us pure and holy, and to save us from our sins. Come, let us thank Him for His love.' And Aunt Kate prayed:

'O Lord Jesus, we thank Thee, that though Thou wast rich Thou didst for our sakes become poor; that though all power was Thine, Thou didst for us become a weak, helpless infant. We pray Thee to help us to be good and obedient and gentle like the Holy Child Jesus, that at last we may live with Thee in Thy Father's house above. For Thy Name's sake. Amen.'

THE CLIFTONS, AND THEIR PLAYHOURS.

CHAPTER XII.—THE DIFFICULTY SETTLED.

LEDA was soon strong enough to join in all the games, yet she was not exactly happy; she still wanted to confess about the Pratts, but she thought it would be dishonourable to do it unless Mary was willing. One day as she was reading her little Testament she came on a text that revived all her trouble in full force: 'With the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'

'Then if I don't confess I can't be saved! What must I do?' thought the perplexed child.

She had been reading a few verses in her bedroom, but it was too cold to stay, so she decided to think it over by the school-room fire. Miss Hatherleigh was sitting there alone.

'Why are you not playing with the others, Fleda?' she asked.

'I thought I should prefer staying in.'

'Come here and tell me all about it. You have not been happy for a long while. What is the matter?'

The child knelt by her aunt, laid her head on her lap, and burst into tears.

'I am so miserable, and I do want to tell you, but I mayn't tell you *all*, auntie, because I can't without bringing other people in, and that is not fair if they are not willing.'

'Well, I don't think you ought to confess alone; can't you persuade the others to agree?'

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'I'm afraid not; that is, not all of them. I can tell you about the trowel.' And so, with flushed face and downcast eyes, she gave a true account of all that had happened, honestly repeating her unsisterly speeches, and then explained how her aunt's Silent Comforter had recalled her to peace and righteousness. O, auntie, I was such a mean thing!' and the tears flowed afresh. 'When I first knew about Phebe Stokes I made up my mind to go and read to her, and give her some of my toys; and then when her father gave the trowel to Mary I thought *she* might go, though I never expected she would. Wasn't it too bad?'

'Yes, it was very weak and unkind, but you may still repair your fault. If I were you I would sort out some toys to-night, and take them round to-morrow.'

'I will, auntie; but now I come to my promise,' and the hasty resolve and prolonged repentance were all poured out to the sympathizing listener.

'Such a promise would have been better broken than kept,' said Aunt Lucy.

'But I thought God was pleased with us when we swore to our own hurt and changed not. It says so in the Psalms, I am sure.'

'Not our soul's hurt, dear child; God never means us to promise to do wrong. Suppose you promised to wind a skein of cotton for me, thinking it would only take you a few minutes, and you found it such a tangle that it took all your time between dinner and school, and left you no chance to play. If you stuck to it bravely because it was a promise, that would be the sort of thing mentioned in the text. Of course, that verse refers to more important things than skeins of cotton, but that will serve as an illustration.'

'Then you think I'd better not tell you what Mary wanted us to do?'

'Not behind her back.'

'But, auntie, if I don't tell you I can't be saved; and I shall never be happy again as I was after I was first converted.'

'What makes you think that, my love?'

'Look here!' and she held up her little book. '"With the mouth confession is made unto salvation."'

'That refers to confessing or professing your belief in Christ. Look at the verse before it (Rom. x. 9): "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, . . . thou shalt be saved."'

'Then doesn't it signify whether we own our faults or not?'

'Yes, we are told to do so in other texts, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."'

'Well, I hope I shall feel happy again now.'

'We have only tried half the prescription,' said Miss Hatherleigh, kindly: 'you have confessed to me, I will pray for you that you "may be healed;"' and putting her arm round the little one, they knelt together. So simply did Aunt Lucy confess the fault to a loving Father, that Fleda felt relieved and comforted, and joined most heartily in the words.

'Auntie, do you think the others will see I have been crying?' asked Fleda.

'I am afraid so; you had better come out into the fresh air a bit. We will take a walk together if you like.'

That was a very pleasant walk in the gloaming. They spoke of many things, and seemed to draw closer to each other with that loving sympathy which unites souls, even when there is such difference of age. They decided to pray that Mary might consent to a full explanation.

It was quite dark when they reached home. Mary joined Fleda as she passed the nursery door, and slipped her arm round her sister's waist, saying, 'I will come with you while you take your things off, dear. I'll light the gas for you;' but she did not do it directly, and Fleda began to undress in the dark.

'What have you and auntie been talking about?' she asked.

'Lots of things,' said Fleda; secretly wondering why she did not light the gas. 'I have told her all about the trowel, and how cross I was; and, Mary, I really am very sorry, and I hope you'll forgive me.'

'My dear Flidkins, we must forgive each other. I was very trying, too. Did you tell her about the Pratts, too?' added Mary with studied indifference in her tone.

'No; I thought it would be mean without your leave.'

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'You might as well, while you were about it,' said Mary, striking a match.

'Let's both go together, as soon as I have put my hair tidy. I shall be so thankful to have this trouble off my mind.'

'To tell the truth, so shall I.'

* * * *

Winter passed away, and with the return of spring the children once more looked up their gardening tools.

'Where on earth is the trowel?' asked Dick, after searching every play-box.

'Who had it last?' enquired Mary.

'Not I,' said Fleda. 'I did no gardening after I was ill. The last time I saw it the two boys were setting potatoes with it.'

Alfred and Dick looked at each other as the truth dawned upon them.

'Why, Dick, I left it in that tin—'

'That I kicked into the water! Girls, I'm very sorry, but it's at the bottom of the pond.'

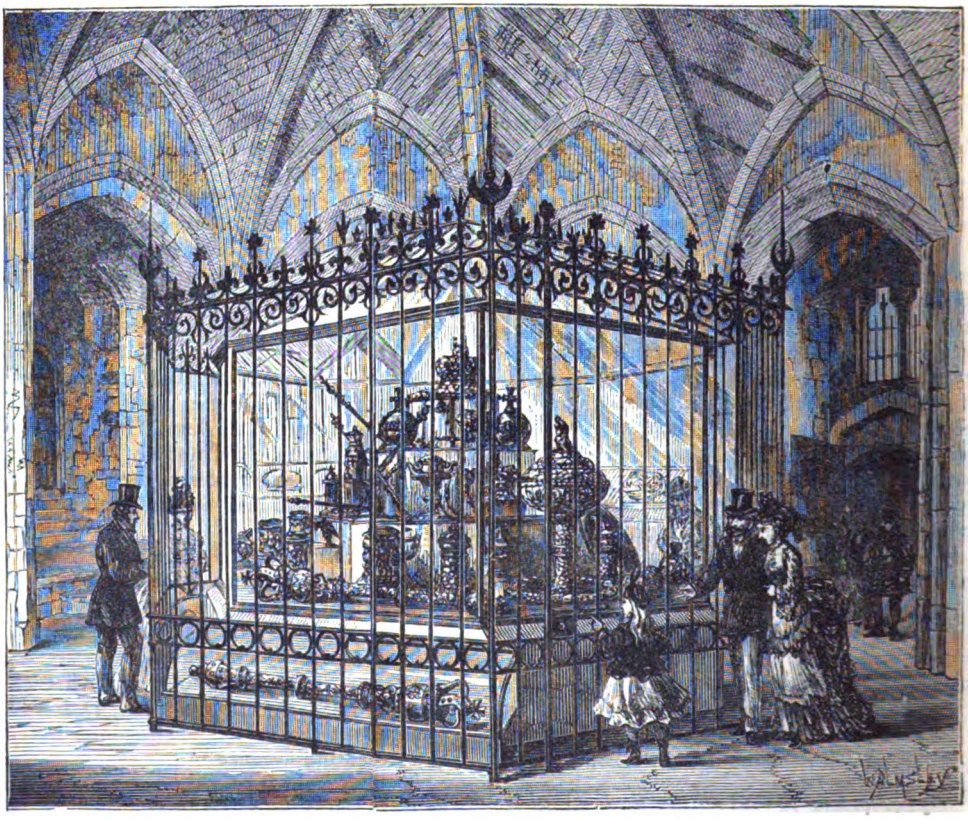
'I quite forgot it was in the box or we would have got it out at once, but I'm very sorry,' said Alf.

'I'm not,' said Mary and Fleda both at once.

'And now we can't quarrel about the hateful thing any more. How nice!' exclaimed Louie.

THE TOWER OF LONDON.

CHAPTER III.—THE WHITE TOWER.—THE REGALIA.—WHERE THE RACK STOOD.—LITTLE EASE.



The Regalia.

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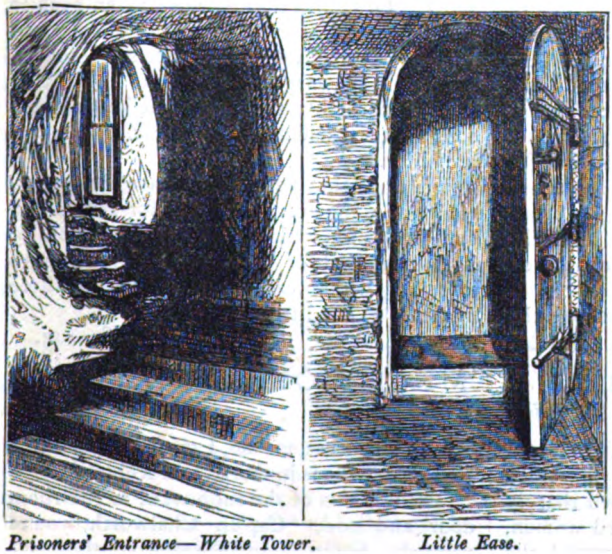
THE White Tower is that part of the Tower known as Cæsar's, where Norman and Plantagenet kings held their court, where foreign traders came to lay out their fancy bazaars, and where also were kept the royal robes and jewels.

This tower, ninety feet high, is laid out in four stories, the vaults, the main floor, the banqueting floor and the State floor. Each floor contains three rooms, besides the vaults, and those dark, close dungeons to which rebels, pirates and Jews were mercilessly confined.

A chamber called Little Ease runs across, still darker and damper. It is believed that Guy Fawkes was put into Little Ease. I do not know whether the idea of this chamber was taken from the Inquisition. Little Ease, in the Inquisition, was a room too small for the prisoner to be comfortable in any position. He could not stand upright nor lie down. There are inscriptions on the walls, and in another crypt of the White Tower may be made out:



Prisoners' Entrance—White Tower. *Little Ease.*

'HE THAT INDURETH TO THE ENDE
SHALL BE SAVID
M 10. R. Rudaton
Dur. Kent. Ano. 1553.
Be faithful unto the Deth and I will
Give thee a crowne of Life
F. Fane 1554.'

One might think it almost as hard to get into the White Tower as out of it, the stairways are so narrow and winding. A Bishop of Durham, Ralph Flambard, who was imprisoned there, accomplished the latter feat. He gave a banquet to his wardens, chaplains and servants, professedly because he was not kept close and hard like other prisoners, but was allowed to enjoy himself in almost any way that was agreeable to him.

At this banquet he pretended to

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drink with the rest, but it was only pretence; for when he had thoroughly unmanned them all and sent them asleep, he took a long rope out of a jar, tied it to a window-shaft, and let himself down sixty-five feet to the ground. Prince Griffin, knowing what Flambard had done and how well he had succeeded, tried to let himself down from the leads, but broke his neck in the attempt.

The place were the rack stood is so gloomy and dark that there are not many of our young readers who would like to venture in alone. It must have been a dreadful thing to have been led there—the instrument of torture awaiting one.

From a fac-simile of Guy Fawkes's hand-writing, both before and after he was laid on the rack, we can see its power over even a strong, firm man; and need not wonder that recantation and false witness have been wrung from the victims, which they would gladly have recalled afterward.

The thumb-screw and the rack were seldom applied to any person of rank; but sturdy knights and barons must have trembled when they thought of the test awaiting the fortitude of their loyal servitors.

When Felton, the assassin of the Duke of Buckingham, was on trial for the crime, Archbishop Laud told him that he must confess or go upon the rack. 'If I am racked, my lord,' was his reply, 'I may happen in my agony to accuse your lordship.' That was a consequence the archbishop had not thought of. However, it was decided that, according to English law, the torture could not be used; and happily it was abandoned, and the instruments of it are only kept on exhibition as relics.

In the Record Tower were preserved the crown and sceptre, globe and staff; in fact, all the jewels worn by the English kings. The knight in charge was called the Master of the Regalia.

The practice of admitting visitors to inspect them was introduced by Sir Gilbert Talbot, by the king's permission, in order that the fees might increase his salary, which was small, considering the importance of his trust. On the south wall of St. Peter's church is a slab to the memory of Talbot Edwards, deputy-keeper of the crown jewels. He was eighty years of age when a very clever plot was laid to take away his treasure, and the poor old man was nearly beaten to death by the ruffians in his attempt to give the alarm. The conspirators had made off with the Regalia, but were hardly outside the Tower when they were overtaken. Then there was such a scuffle that the crown of England was rolled in the mud, and some of the gems fell out. A street-sweeper picked up the pearl, and an apprentice the diamond, but some of the gems were never recovered.

The man who carried off the globe was stopped, and turned out to be a notorious rebel. Of course they were all taken back to the Tower as prisoners, instead of the pleasant curious visitors they had pretended to be. You will be surprised to hear that King Charles pardoned them all; but he had reasons for that, which you may learn when you are older.

We hope that you may all have the opportunity of going over the Tower for yourselves, and that you may learn a great deal more of its history and of the characters who have lived in it, than can possibly be put in three chapters of our little *Early Days*.

SARSON.

MAGGIE'S TEMPTATION.

(*Concluded from page* 167.)

MAGGIE wiped away her tears and followed her brother into the shop; he walked up to the counter and rapped sharply with the half-crown. A rosy-cheeked woman, wearing a large white apron, answered the summons.

'If you please, ma'am, I want to speak to a gentleman who is in there,' said Robbie.

The mistress of the shop went to the room door and said, 'Cap'en Chalworth, you're wanted. Go in, go in,' she said, gently pushing the children towards the door.

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Robbie began very hurriedly, 'If you please, Sir, you passed us a little while ago in the Cathedral Avenue, and you dropped this half-crown by the lamp-post,' and Robbie laid the shining coin on the white table-cloth. Captain Chalworth looked admiringly on the boy's honest face, and laying his hand on his curly head, said, 'Well, I'm sure it was very good o' you to bring it back to me like this; uncommon honest, I call it. I think it must be mine, too, for I remember I had a new half-crown in my pocket when I left my ship, and I aint got it now, and I certainly did come through the Avenue.' Then turning to the children he said, 'But you are two rare, honest little folks, and the least we can do for you is to give you a good supper. A hot supper of sausages and potatoes, if you please, Mrs. Carver; we'll return them the half-crown in that shape this cold night.'

Robbie's eyes glistened at this kind proposal, and he was beginning a fresh expression of thanks, when Maggie, who until then had remained silently behind her brother, stepped forward.

'O stop, please, Sir,' she said, raising her eyes pleadingly to the Captain's face, 'I want to say something first: *I* don't deserve my supper. *I* am not honest,—Robbie is, but I'm not.' Here her voice shook, so she had to stop while great tears rolled slowly down her cheek.

'Why, Maggie,' said Robbie, in an astonished voice, 'it was you as showed me where he was.'

'I know that,' said Maggie, in a low voice, 'but I saw him a long time before, and at first I thought I wouldn't tell you, but try to make you keep the money. I know it was awful wicked of me,' she continued tearfully; 'but I was so very, very hungry, and the hot things inside did smell so nice.'

'Poor little thing,' said the Captain in his kindest tones, 'how was it you came to do right after all?'

Maggie raised her dark eyes to his face, and said with simple earnestness, 'I thought what *God* and mother would say about it, Sir, and then I was obliged to tell.' Here Mrs. Carver retired with her apron over her eyes, while the Captain's eyes, too, grew suddenly misty. Then laying one bronzed hand on Robbie's shoulder, and taking Maggie's hand in the other, he said heartily, 'Look here, you must both have some supper right off, and afterwards we'll have a bit of chat together.'

In another moment the two hungry children were seated at the white covered table, with plates of smoking sausages and potatoes.

Captain Chalworth meanwhile sat in an arm-chair by the fire, and watched the rapid disappearance of potatoes and sausages with great satisfaction. When they had finished, the Captain bade Mrs. Carver and the children draw round the fire. Then Robbie, who, thanks to the good supper and bright firelight, looked quite rosy, told their simple, but sad story. He told of the death of father and mother, of their consequent poverty, and almost desperate condition when they found the half-crown. After Rob had finished, the Captain remarked, 'Now, my lad, the next thing is to help you to get a living.'

Going to sea was proposed; but although Rob liked the idea, he did not care to be parted from Maggie, and the Captain knew his next voyage was likely to be a rough one for a beginner. Suddenly, giving the table a vigorous thump, he said, 'I have it; you've often said, Mrs. Carver, no one sold green-grocery near, and how awkward it was to get such like. Now, why not set up in that line yourself? the vegetables would come very handy for your cooking; and let Rob go about with a basket selling the green stuff and getting orders.' This plan met with every one's approval. The happy children poured forth their thanks, for this arrangement would give Maggie work as well. But Captain Chalworth told them to keep their thanks for their best Friend above.

A week or two afterwards Rob began his duties, and his merry face and well-stocked basket were soon well known in the streets around. Every morning when Maggie sent him off looking so brisk and happy, her heart would swell with gratitude to the kind Heavenly Father Who when she was on the brink of a sore temptation had kept her feet from falling.

A. J. D.

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The Greengrocer's Boy. *See page* 189.

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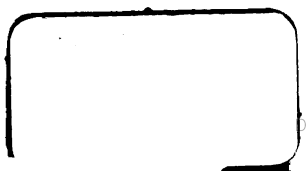

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